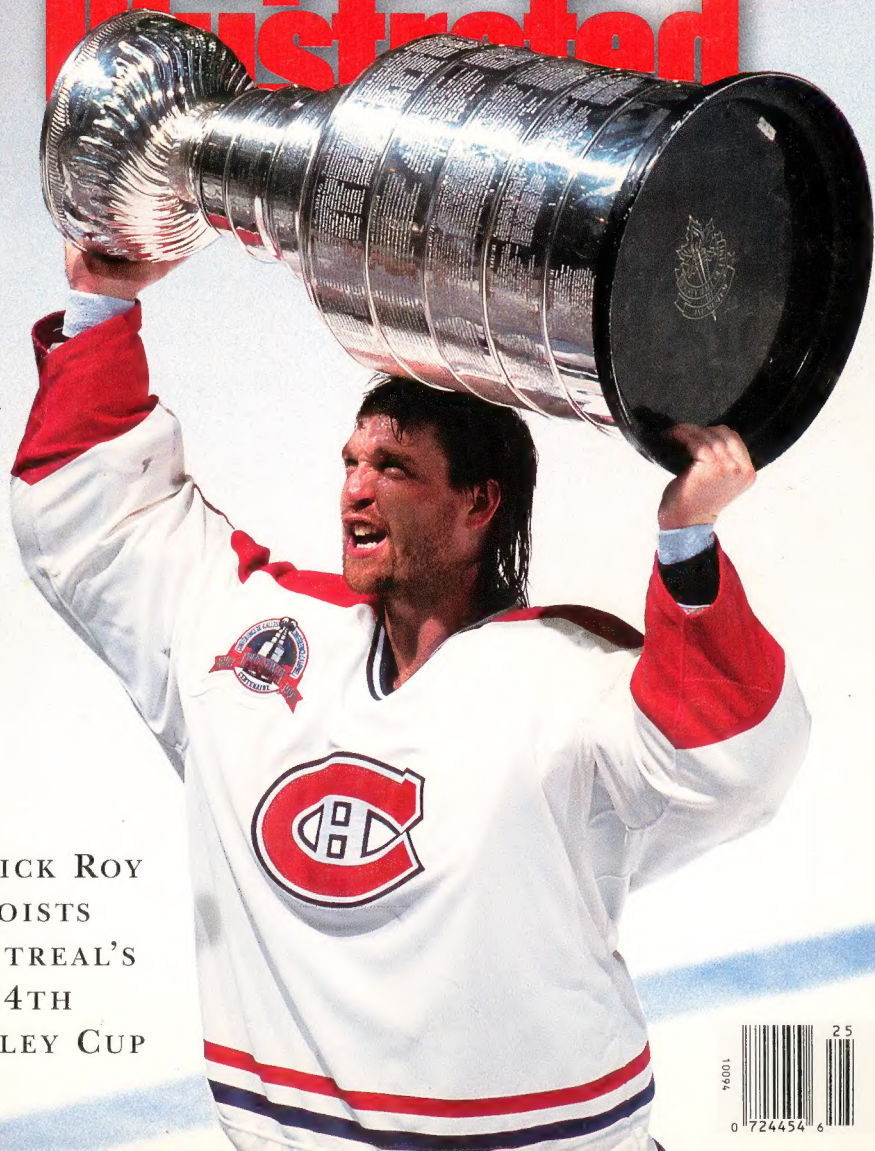


CANADA

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Sports Illustrated



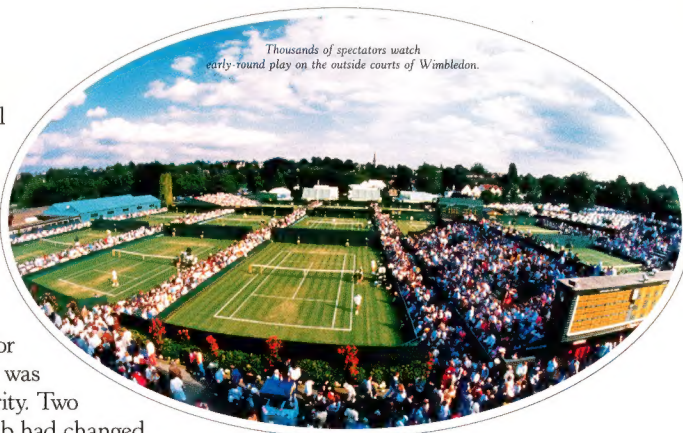
PATRICK ROY
HOISTS
MONTREAL'S
24TH
STANLEY CUP



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In 1869, the All England Croquet Club established itself on four rented acres in Wimbledon. By 1875, the Club had set aside a rectangle of grass for lawn tennis, which was growing in popularity. Two years later, the Club had changed its name to the All England Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club.

That same year, some 200 spectators watched as 22 amateur players competed for a silver cup, which was awarded



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Members of the All England Croquet Club pose for a photograph in 1870.

to Spencer Gore, the first Wimbledon champion.

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JUNE 21, 1993 VOLUME 1, NO. 3

COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY
PAUL BERESWILL

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Once upon a time, Tinseltown was a heavenly place to watch celebrity-studded minor league baseball
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Habs' Habit

The Canadiens, including playoff-MVP goalie Patrick Roy (lower left), gathered around the Stanley Cup, which Montreal won for the 24th time (page 20).

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DAVID S. KLUTZ

Cheers to Sam Malone

Thanks for the wonderful profile of Sam Malone (*Everybody Knows His Name*, May 24). I happened to be walking outside Memorial Stadium in Baltimore on the day that Lee May hit that shot out of the park. (As soon as Mayday came in, I knew the game was over and had made an early exit to the parking lot.) The ball bounced once on the blacktop, ricocheted off a red Corvette and then rolled around

I enjoyed your story on Mayday Malone, but as a long-suffering Red Sox fan, I must add a postscript to your story. It seems that Sammy's last major league appearance, in 1978, was not the last time he would affect the Sox that fateful year. It's a little known fact that before he was waived Sam taught his "slider of death" to Mike Torrez. Of course, when Torrez's back was to the wall in the '78 playoff game against the Yankees, he remem-

were sitting above the dugout at my first big league game. He gave me an autographed ball to keep me quiet and to get my mother's attention.

Recently I took my wife and son to a card show in Boston. I wanted my son's first autograph to be the same one his old man had gotten. Sure enough, while I was standing at the end of the autograph line, my wife and son went up and walked past the front of the table. She caught Sam's eye, and he motioned for her to come over. He opened the conversation by giving my son an autograph and my wife his phone number. Sam may have retired from the game and closed the bar, but he's still pitching.

BRUCE WANK
Newport Beach, Calif.

Although you told the story of Sam Malone's exit from the big leagues, you did not tell how Don Zimmer fired coach Ernie Pantusso during the '78 season because Zim was unhappy with the way Coach had dealt with some of the Red Sox players. Coach related this story to Diane in an attempt to console her after she had made some blunder:

Coach: "Diane, it looks like you booted a grounder. You know what I used to say when one of my players made a mistake?"

Diane: "What was that?"

Coach: "Nothing. That's why I got fired."

Out of baseball and in need of work, Coach was offered a job as a bartender at Cheers, and the rest is history.

GREGG BROWN
State College, Pa.

I was appalled to see you devote so much space to a fictitious former ballplayer when there are real former ballplayers who deserve the recognition. In fact, we have such a deserving former ballplayer right here in our community: Just last winter Sidd Finch opened a yogurt shop in downtown Sykesville.

JOHN CANNON
Sykesville, Md.

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Sam's Stand-ins

Congratulations on producing such terrific pictures from Sam's baseball career. Can you show us the original photographs? The one of him getting carried off the field must be Jim Lonborg being mobbed by fans after he defeated the Twins on the last day of the 1967 season, in a game the Sox needed to win the pennant.

BRAD ADAMS
Lake Bluff, Ill.

● You're right; to create that shot of Sam, we used the photo of Lonborg you have in mind. We also used Lonborg for the picture of Sam following through, and Luis Tiant for the one of Sam watching a home run sail out of Fenway Park.—ED.

for a few seconds before I was able to pick it up.

I still have the ball. Since Cheers opened, I have had a lot of offers for it, but some things, like Steve Rushin's article, are absolutely priceless.

BARRY DONNELLY
Ramsey, N.J.

bered his buddy's pitch and tried to sneak it past Bucky Dent. You know the rest.

TOM MAGNUSON
Wausau, Wis.

I first met Sam Malone in 1972 as a 12-year-old, when he approached my mother at Anaheim Stadium while we

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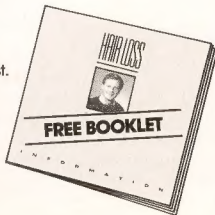
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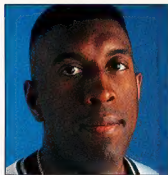
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Faces in the Crowd

Patrick Rhodd MISSISSAUGA, ONT.

Rhodd, a 6' 6" basketball forward and a recent graduate of Humber College, scored 16 points and had 17 rebounds as the Hawks beat Douglas College 60-53 for an unprecedented third consecutive Canadian Colleges championship. A three-time All-Canadian, Rhodd averaged 16.6 points and nine rebounds this season.



MARTIN JOHNSON

Sam Phillippy GREENFIELD, IND.

Chad Phillippy GREENFIELD, IND.

Sam, 48, a junior high industrial technology teacher, and his son Chad, 18, won state titles in the same weight class at a U.S. Powerlifting Federation meet in Carmel. Competing in the 181-pound masters division, Sam hoisted 501 1/2 pounds in both the squat and the deadlift, and he bench-pressed 286 1/2 for a total of 1,289 1/2. He thereby earned his 11th state championship, the previous 10 of which had been open-division titles. He is also a former USPF national masters runner-up, having lifted a combined total of 1,603 pounds in 1985. Chad, who competed in the 181-pound open division, lifted less than his father did but nonetheless placed first. He squatted 457 1/4 pounds, deadlifted 446 1/4 and bench-pressed 242 1/2 for a 1,146-pound total.



SAV SCOTT



SAV SCOTT

Becki Wells DICKINSON, N.DAK.

Becki, a recent graduate of Dickinson High, won the girls' 1,600- and 3,200-meter runs at the state track and field championships for the fourth consecutive year. She also won the 800, in a state-record time of 2:13.19. Becki has the top high school times for girls in the U.S. this year in both the 800 (2:07.06) and the 1,600 (4:42.58).



JIM ROBINSON

Elma Ong WEST VANCOUVER, B.C.

Elma, 18, won the Canadian under-19 girls' singles badminton championship by defeating Canada's top-ranked junior player—her identical twin sister, Moira—11-8, 12-10. Though Elma is ranked second in Canada, she has now defeated Moira twice this year; the other win came at the Vancouver Lawn Junior Invitational in January.



PETER BATHURST

Matt Riter HOMER, N.Y.

Riter, a senior attack on the Syracuse lacrosse team, scored two goals—including the game-winner with eight seconds remaining—and had one assist as the Orangemen beat North Carolina 13-12 for the NCAA title, Syracuse's fourth in six years. Riter, an All-America, led the 1993 Orangemen with 64 points on 49 goals and 15 assists.



ERIC C. MERRILL



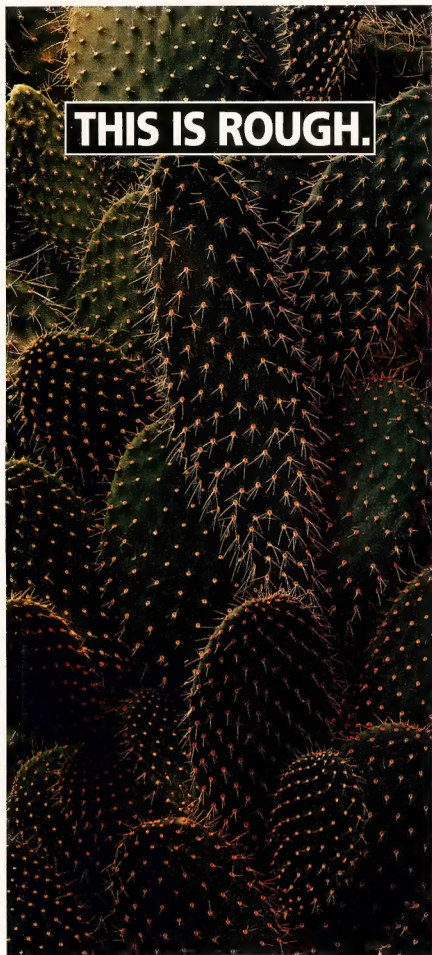
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SCORECARD

Edited by Jerry Kirshenbaum

Drazen's Legacy

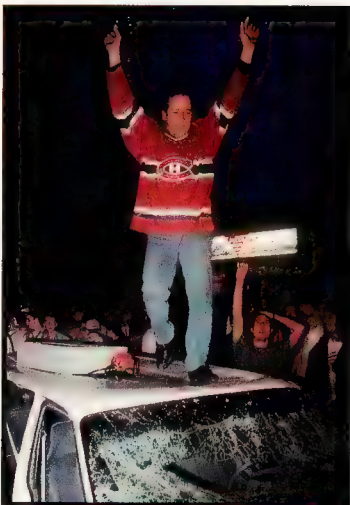
IMPOSSIBLE! keened the headline in a Croatian newspaper, bearing word that one of that troubled land's favorite sons, 28-year-old New Jersey Net star Drazen Petrovic, had been killed in a car accident on a rain-slicked German autobahn. But the news was crushingly true.

Petrovic played with an intensity that belied his slacked-jawed expression on the court. "You play correct, or we will fight!" he once snapped at Utah Jazz forward Blue Edwards, who had fixed him with an elbow. In time Edwards and the rest of the NBA came to play Drazen correct.

Petrovic had a passionate belief in his abilities, a conviction that didn't waver even when he rode the bench for his first NBA club, the Portland Trail Blazers. In 1991 Portland obliged his request for a trade, sending him to New Jersey. Over his first off-season with the Nets he worked out zealously, adding 20 pounds to his bony frame and demonstrating a discipline many had doubted he had. Only once all summer did he take time off, to visit his brother Aleksandr in Florida—or so he told his agent and the Nets. In fact, he had sneaked off for three days to visit family and friends in war-torn Croatia. "I'm playing basketball," he said, "and my friends are getting killed."

At age 20 Petrovic scored 112 points in a game in the Yugoslav league, and at 22 he was recognized as the finest player in Europe. He was also a provocateur who spat at referees, taunted opposing fans and once emptied a bottle of mineral water over the head of a courtside official. That mix of talent and ferocity helped Petrovic excel not only in the NBA but also at the Barcelona Olympics, where he outshone celebrated teammate Toni Kukoc in leading Croatia to the silver medal, behind the Dream Team.

Petrovic believed that xenophobia kept him off the NBA All-Star Team the past two years, during which he helped lead New Jersey back to respectability. The slight was particularly galling last season



The Agony of Victory

In a rampage similar to those that occurred after the Detroit Tigers won the World Series in 1984 and the Chicago Bulls won their first NBA title in '91, Montreal's central business district exploded last week minutes after the Canadiens hoisted the Stanley Cup for the 24th time. For more than two hours crowds that had assembled outside the Forum, ostensibly to celebrate the Habs' victory over the Los Angeles Kings, overturned cars, set fires, smashed windows and heaved rocks and bottles at police. More than 100 people were arrested, and some 50 cops were injured before order was restored. Damage estimates reached \$10 million.

With more than one million foreign fans expected to storm U.S. shores next year for the World Cup, authorities in the nine cities where games will be played are worried about possible violence by Europe's notorious soccer hooligans. But as the rash of sports riots in North America sadly suggests, Europe doesn't have a monopoly on thugs.

when he averaged 22.3 points a game and was third in the NBA in three-point shooting. He would have become an unrestricted free agent on July 1, and he vowed to play next season in Europe, where he felt he would receive the respect he deserved. Despite his bitterness, the onetime Trail Blazer remained a trailblazer, a man whose career will be an inspiration to the next generation of European stars.

Stick and Duck

Referring to Riddick Bowe's native New York City borough and his slowness to agree to a heavyweight championship unification match against Lennox Lewis, rival trainer Lou Duva has come up with a nickname for the fighter. Duva calls him the Brooklyn Dodger.

Defying Gravity

NBA commissioner David Stern said last week that he had spoken to Michael Jordan about his gambling losses to golf-and-tell author Richard Esquinas (page 74) and had decided that no disciplinary action against Jordan was called for. Of course, Stern reached a similarly benign conclusion last year after Jordan ran up heavy gambling debts to convicted cocaine dealer James (Slim) Boulter. After NBA officials questioned Jordan about his dealings with Boulter, Stern said, "Michael has advised us that he understands the gravity of the situation."

But in *Hang Time: Days and Dreams with Michael Jordan*, a book by *Chicago Tribune* columnist Bob Greene published last fall, Jordan treated the situation lightly. Of that '92 meeting, he said, "It should have taken 30 minutes. I knew exactly why we were spending so long. They wanted to be able to say that they called Michael Jordan in and talked about this stuff to him for two-and-a-half hours. Two-and-a-



The hairy creature pictured here is former Arizona State gymnast

Bob Woolf, who in his guise as the Phoenix Suns' mascot, the Gorilla, entertained the home crowd at Games 1 and 2 of the NBA Finals last week by rappelling from the rafters and performing trampoline-powered dunks. As it happens, four other former Sun Devil gymnasts are aping Woolf by also cavorting as highly acrobatic NBA mascots. After

Woolf got the Gorilla gig five years ago, his ex-roommate **Mike Zerrillo** was hired as the Charlotte Hornets' Hugo. Soon **Paul Linne** became the Indiana Pacers' Boomer.

Linne, in turn, put in a good word for **Jerry Burrell** and **John Sweeney**, now the Houston Rockets' Booster and Seattle Sonics' Squatch, respectively. Says the pioneering Woolf, "My friends say, 'The Gorilla is getting all the credit, and you're still a nobody.' But I don't mind. In my job every day is Halloween."



• **Michael Ventre**, in the *Los Angeles Daily News*: "Darryl Strawberry now predicts he's going to the Hall of Fame. The Dodgers probably wish he'd go now so they can replace him with somebody who can hit and field."

• **Wayne Gretzky**, Los Angeles King star, on the satisfaction he derived from making the Stanley Cup finals: "You know you've come a long way when you look at the out-of-town scoreboard and there are no scores."

• **Charles Barkley**, Phoenix Sun star, confiding that he mostly hangs out with people he grew up with: "I have very few friends I have met since I became Charles Barkley."

half hours sounds better than a half hour. So I sat there with them."

According to the Greene book, Jordan also said of that meeting, "Inside me I'm thinking, 'You guys, there's no need for this. We all know what happened. I've learned from this. I know what you really want to know. You want to know if there are any other checks out there that are going to start popping up. No, there are no more checks out there. You won't be seeing this again.'"

That meeting occurred six months after Jordan incurred his losses to Esquinas. In recent weeks Esquinas, by his account, has received two checks from Jordan's representatives totaling \$200,000 as partial payment for those debts.

Three-Pointer

Maybe you heard about the slick one that New York Knick coach Pat Riley pulled. During the 1988-89 season, when the team he was then coaching, the Los Angeles Lakers, was seeking a third straight NBA title, Riley had the foresight to trademark the term Three-Peat. The Lakers didn't succeed, but Riley now figures to clean up if Jordan's Bulls make it three in a row. In that case, entrepreneurs who want to market Three-Peat T-shirts, hats or other merchandise commemorating the Bulls' feat will have to pay royalties to Riley. Otherwise Riley could sic the law, or maybe even John Starks, on them.

To be sure, the NBA isn't completely thrilled that one of its coaches stands to profit from a rival's triumph. Nobody suggests that Riley pulled any punches when the Knicks lost to the Bulls in the Eastern

Conference finals. But one NBA insider says that the league may draft a policy that would bar coaches and other club officials from future business dealings that could create the appearance of a conflict.

The Backup's Backup

On his phone-in radio show, *Lunch with Lach*, Florida Marlin manager Rene Lachemann was asked by a caller when he planned to play backup catcher Mitch Lyden, who as of Sunday had yet to appear in his first big league game. "I have a personal reason for wanting to know," the caller said. "I'm his father-in-law."

Overreaction Alert

Once an anti-owners guy, always an anti-owners guy—that's one way to make sense of the silly attack that U.S. Representative Jim Bunning (R, Ky.) leveled at baseball last week. Acting commissioner Bud Selig had offered each of the 535 members of Congress the chance to buy—that's right, *buy*—two tickets to the July 13 All-Star Game, in Baltimore, and Bunning, a conservative who's ordinarily pro-business, accused the owners of trying to bribe—that's right, *bribe*—the pols not to scrap the game's antitrust exemption.

The charge, which Bunning made in a letter to his Capitol Hill colleagues headed *BRIBE ALERT*, indicates that he still distrusts the owners, just as he did while winning 224 games as a big league pitcher from 1955 to '71. Bunning was a players' union firebrand who was instrumental in setting up the players' pension fund and hiring Marvin Miller as president of the increasingly militant union. But the suggestion that baseball can curry favor with members of Congress by offering to sell them tickets—Selig called the offer a "courtesy"—is laughable in light of the large sums of money that political action committees lavish on the legislators in hopes of influencing policy. Indeed, Bunning himself received \$439,491 in PAC contributions last year, which ranks him in the top 10% of House members.



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1993



**In a final series to remember, Montreal goalie Patrick Roy
helped deliver both the Stanley Cup and his first daughter
by E.M. SWIFT**

Saving



Roy flat out frustrated the Kings with one dazzling save after another.

Grace



Roy made this save in Game 1, which was Montreal's only loss.

Roy (pronounced WAH) said, "When I made the save on Robitaille, Sandstrom hit at me again. So I winked. I wanted to show him I'd be tough. That I was in control."

In control? Is that what you would call Roy's remarkable 10 straight overtime wins in the 1993 playoffs (page 20), a record the Canadiens set during their run to their 24th Stanley Cup? How about invincible? Impenetrable? Or, as one fan's banner in the Montreal Forum had it: INC-ROY-HAB-LE?

After the Canadiens opened the playoffs with a loss—in OT to the Quebec Nordiques in a game in which Roy was later criticized for having let in a soft goal in the final minute to force the extra session—Roy simply closed the door when games were on the line. For the remainder of the postseason, Montreal went 12–0 in one-goal games. In the 10 overtime wins, Roy played 96 minutes and 39 seconds of sudden-death hockey without yielding a goal, the equivalent of more than a game and a half. During those extra sessions he kicked out 65 shots.

With a 16–4 record and a 2.13 goals-against average in the playoffs, Roy atoned for what had been, for him, a mediocre regular season under first-year coach Jacques Demers, who had introduced Montreal to a more wide-open style than the Canadiens had played in recent years. "The one thing as a coach I'll take credit for," said Demers after the playoffs, "is I stood with Patrick. I was not going to let him get down on himself after he gave up a soft goal against Quebec. He was just outstanding, sensational, dominating."

It wasn't the first time that Roy had put rings on the fingers of his Montreal teammates. In 1985–86, his rookie season, he had also led the Canadiens to the Stanley Cup, and he won the Conn Smythe Trophy as MVP of the playoffs. But this Cup

Did pregame talks with his goalposts help Roy stand tall against the crease-crashing Kings?

is sweeter to him than his first one was for a number of good reasons—none of which was better than the six-pound, nine-ounce daughter that Roy helped his wife, Michele, deliver on the morning after Game 1 of the finals at the Montreal Forum.

Sudden death. Sudden life. No question, the 27-year-old Roy had a busy play-off. Montreal, as it happened, lost Game 1 to Los Angeles without putting up much of a fight. Afterward, Roy suggested that the Canadiens had had entirely too much time to digest the compli-

A SMALL GESTURE, TO BE SURE, but one as debilitating under the circumstances as the most thunderous bodycheck. Montreal Canadian goaltender Patrick Roy merely looked at his opponent and winked.

What had he been thinking? Deep into overtime in Game 4 of the Stanley Cup finals on June 7, with the Los Angeles King forwards literally knocking at his goalmouth, Roy stoned Luc Robitaille and froze the puck. Then, impishly, he glanced at the Kings' Tomas Sandstrom and flicked his left eyelash, like some kid in a street hockey game. This amused, unharried wink was surely one of the most memorable in hockey history. What did this outrageous gesture mean?

That Roy was cocky? That he was loose? That the puck looked as big to him as a manhole cover? That the snakebitten Kings, who had already suffered two straight backbreaking overtime losses to the Canadiens and were about to suffer their third, could play till Sunset Boulevard froze over and never poke the puck past Roy in OT?

Last Friday, while riding in the backseat of a white stretch limousine in Montreal, under police escort to a Canadian victory parade that was not about to begin without him, Roy pondered that question. He could not recall ever before having winked at an opponent. Certainly not in overtime of the Stanley Cup finals. "Always Sandstrom is in my crease, bothering me, hitting at me when I have the puck,"

ROBERT BECK



mentary articles that were written about them during their seven-day layoff following the Wales Conference finals. "When everybody's telling you how great you're doing, you start to believe it," he said.

Later he drove Michele to Lakeshore Hospital. They arrived at midnight. Roy wanted to be there for his child's birth—he and Michele already had two sons, Jonathan, 4, and Frederick, 2—and Michele had wanted Patrick to coach her through the delivery. And funny thing about childbirth: You never know when

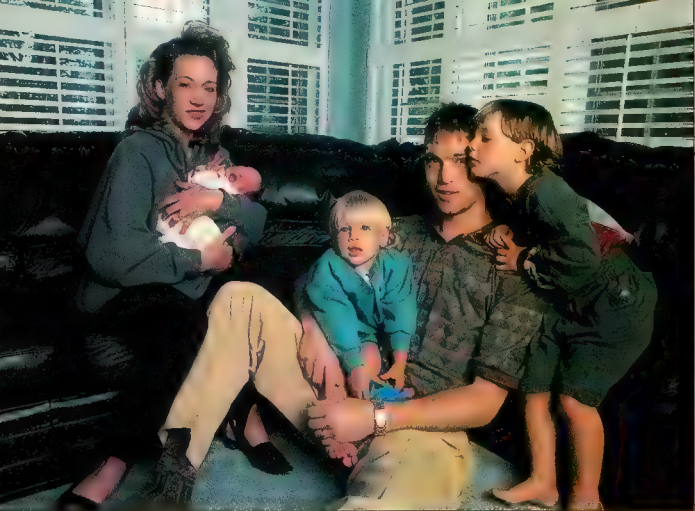
the doggone little darlings will arrive. So, fearing the baby would choose to make her entrance at the worst possible time, when the team was in Los Angeles for Games 3 and 4, the Roys asked Michele's doctor to induce labor, and he agreed. Patrick got a couple of hours' sleep at the hospital. At 4 a.m. Michele went into labor. At 6 a.m. the big contractions kicked in.

On June 2, at 7:50 a.m., Jana Roy was born. "Michele pushed only three times," Roy says. "The baby came right out."

Jana. The name is a cross between

Jeanne, Michele's grandmother, and Anna, Patrick's grandmother. Anna Peacock was a big-time Canadian fan, unlike the Roys, who cheered for the hometown Quebec Nordiques when they played in the World Hockey Association. Anna's favorite Montreal player was goalie Ken Dryden. She would listen to the games on the radio while she was feeding young Patrick his dinner—Barbara Roy, Anna's daughter and Patrick's mother, worked as a swimming coach in the evenings—and speak French to him. Barbara, too, spoke only French at home, the result being that





Patrick did not learn English until he joined the Canadiens for the 1985-86 season. "The last time I saw Anna in the hospital, she was watching the Islanders play Vancouver in the [1982] Stanley Cup finals," says Roy. "She was a real big hockey fan."

Shortly afterward, Anna died of cancer. She never knew that her grandson was drafted 51st in 1984 by her beloved Canadiens. "If she was still here," he says, "she would probably die from the excitement."

Like Dryden, Roy was sensational in the playoffs as a rookie, leading the Canadiens to the Cup with a stunning 1.92 goals-against average. Roy also created something of a stir when he let it slip that he talks to his goalposts before games. Like many hockey players, Roy is extremely superstitious, so after the national anthems he faces his net and tells the goalposts that they're all going to play wonderful hockey, without how little black objects to enter. Then he stares at the net until he can visualize it getting smaller and smaller. Only then is he ready to play the game.

Unlike Dryden, however, Roy stopped getting his name on the Stanley Cup after his rookie season. He was still a dominant player, winning three Vezina Trophies as the NHL's best goalie and getting named to the league's first or second All-Star team five times in the next six years. But a perception remained among Montreal fans that despite his superb statistics, Roy was prone to giving up soft goals in big games, often at the moment his team could least afford it.

After the series Roy finally got to spend time with Michele, Jana, Frederick and Jonathan.

Certainly that was the rap on Roy in last season's playoffs, when the Canadiens were ignominiously swept by the Boston Bruins in the second round. "He didn't have a good playoff last year," says Montreal general manager Serge Savard, "but he wasn't the reason we lost. It was a real team effort."

Nonetheless, Roy, the Canadiens' best player, served as a lightning rod for the criticisms of frustrated Montrealers, who, since 1944, had not gone more than seven years without their team winning the Stanley Cup. And 1993 brought another seven-year itch. The once adoring locals were starting to smell Roy's blood. "Roy-is-the-best-goalie-in-the-world has become a mantra, not a given," wrote columnist Michael Farber in the *Montreal Gazette* on the eve of the playoffs, "and chanting it over and over won't necessarily make it so." The headline of the article was: IT'S TIME FOR ROY TO SALVAGE REPUTATION.

That wasn't going to be easy. He had followed his disappointing 1992 playoff performance with his worst regular season since his rookie year. His goals-against average under Demers's more wide-open system had shot up from 2.36 to 3.20, and for the first time since the 1987-88 season he failed to be one of the three finalists nominated for the Vezina.

"Pat's struggles this year were new to

PATRICK ROY

him," says forward Kirk Muller, who, after Roy, was the most valuable Canadian in the playoffs. "Obviously people in Montreal expect a lot from him, and he can't really have a bad game—ever. But I think the struggle he had made him a better goaltender. It pushed him to a new level."

Roy, who lives in the Montreal suburb of Rosemere, was troubled by a poll taken in January by a local paper in which a majority of the respondents thought he should be traded. Those rumblings increased when the Canadiens dropped the first two games to Quebec in the Adams Division semifinals, and Roy's critics could point out that he had allowed soft goals in both defeats. NORDIQUES WIN GAME, BATTLE OF GOALIES read one headline. The subhead added, [Quebec goalie Ron] HEXTALL GETS BETTER OF ROY.

Demers resisted calls to start backup Andre Racicot in Game 3 and stayed true to a preseason promise that he would stand behind Roy all season. "He always believed in me," says Roy. "I had a lot of critics. If we had lost to Quebec in the first round, it would have been a long, bad summer, and probably Patrick Roy would have been part of some trade."

Ever superstitious, Roy figured it was time to change his luck. He switched the order in which he skated around the face-off circles before warming up, a ritual he had faithfully followed for seven years. When the Nordiques practiced at the Montreal Forum, he watched them from



During the victory parade the Stanley Cup really went to the head of one Canadian fan.

Roy, who was subjected to severe criticism, is again No. 1 in the hearts of Montrealers.

the same seat—B-7. (After Jana was born, Roy sat in J-2 in Los Angeles, in honor of her June 2 birth date.) Presto, change-o, Roy's goalposts began listening to him again.

The Canadiens, and Roy, reeled off a record-tying 11 consecutive playoff wins. Seven of them came in overtime, including two marathon victories over the New York Islanders, who saw Roy thwart both Benoit Hogue and Pierre Turgeon on clean breakaways in consecutive overtime games.

Roy credited, of all people, former Islander great Mike Bossy for having given him a tip on how to play breakaways. "It was two years ago, and one day he said to me that on breakaways you must protect the five-hole," says Roy, referring to the triangle between the legs, "because if a guy has to go top shelf, he misses the net most of the time."

As the playoffs progressed it seemed as if the Canadiens actually played for overtime, repeatedly dumping the puck in the last 10 minutes of the third period and then turning their offense loose in the extra frame. "We didn't mind going into overtime," says Roy. "I knew my teammates were going to score goals if I gave them some time. My concentration was at such a high level. My mind was right there. I felt fresh, like I could stop everything."

Fresh? Every other new father who has been through natural childbirth feels like going home and sleeping for 40 days. Here was Roy, at the end of the longest hockey season on record, shuttling between Los Angeles and Montreal, cities 2,500 miles apart, in the Stanley Cup finals, saying how wonderfully rested he felt. Winking at the opposition to prove it. Tired, Tomas? Not me.

His presence in goal seemed to sap the energy from the Kings as much as it buoyed the Canadiens, who played better and better as the finals progressed. "When Patrick Roy makes a promise, he keeps it," said Montreal forward Mike Keane after the Canadiens, in a bit of historical justice, took home the 100th Stanley Cup with a dominating 4-1 win at home in Game 5. "He isn't an outspoken guy, but he said he was going to shut the door tonight, and he did."

In the wink of an eye. ■





A Perfect 10

With skill, savvy and a little luck, the Canadiens won a record 10 straight overtime games en route to the Stanley Cup | by JON SCHER

IF ALEXEI GUSAROV COULD HAVE GOTTEN out of the way, the Montreal Canadiens might never have beaten the Quebec Nordiques.

If Pat LaFontaine hadn't been in the wrong place at the wrong time, the Buffalo Sabres might have given the Canadiens a scare.

If Benoit Hogue and Pierre Turgeon

hadn't each gagged on a breakaway, the New York Islanders might have advanced to the Stanley Cup finals.

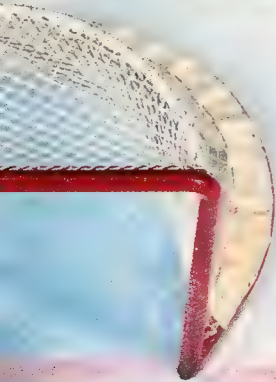
If Marty McSorley's stick had been in compliance with NHL regulation 20(b), the Los Angeles Kings might have been Stanley Cup champions.

If, if, if. To win an unprecedented 10 overtime games in a row, you have to pick

a pocket or two. But to win their 24th NHL crown, the Canadiens got completely out of hand. For seven heart-stopping weeks they made a mockery of the law of averages. Their performance was too spectacular to be coincidental, too uncanny to be a fluke. "Sure, we were lucky," says Canadian forward Kirk Muller. "We also were good."

OT No. 10 Canadiens 3, Kings 2

LeClair scored at 14:37



DAVID S. AUTY (FAR LEFT), RICHARD JACKSON (LEFT), PAUL BENSIMILL (BELOW)

OT No. 9 Canadiens 4, Kings 3

LeClair scored at :34



They were a lot more than good. Eleven times the Canadiens emerged from the dressing room for at least one additional period. All but the first time, they won. Their confidence grew with each victory, and Montreal goalie Patrick Roy became the emperor of the extra session.

No team had ever won more than eight consecutive playoff overtime games.

"This is a record," says Montreal coach Jacques Demers, "that may never be broken."

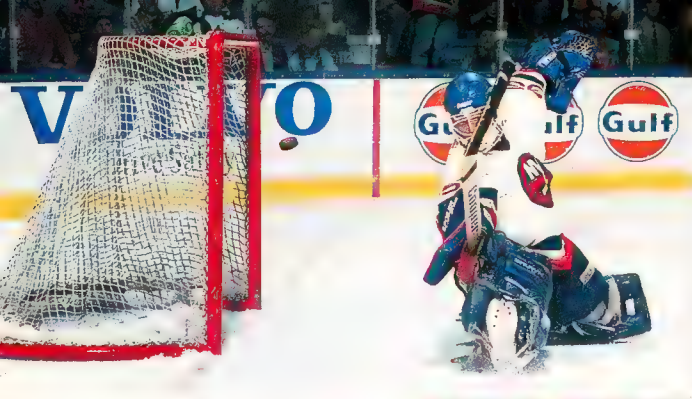
OT No. 1: After winning Game 1 in OT and Game 2 by a comfortable margin, the Nordiques led the Adams Division semifinal series 2-0. The Battle of Quebec shifted to Montreal, and before Game 3,

OT No. 8 Canadiens 3, Kings 2

Desjardins scored at :51

Demers ripped his team for its lack of effort. Although he didn't name names, one of the players he had in mind was forward Vincent Damphousse, a 39-goal scorer during the regular season who had barely shown up for the playoffs.

Damphousse got the message. With



O V E R T I M E

adiens onto the ice for the third period. Thus inspired, Dionne scored to tie the game at 4-4 with 6:37 to play, and with 8:17 gone in OT, Muller slid the puck through Hextall's legs. "A very big win," says Montreal general manager Serge Savard in his typically understated fashion.

"That's the one that captures it all for me," says forward Brian Bellows. "I can still see it in my mind. It was a four-on-four, Vincent Damphousse lost a check at center ice, Kirk went wide on the right side, and Damphousse threw it over to him. Hextall rushed out, and Kirk put it right through the five-hole. Game over. After that, our attitude just kept getting better and better."

The Canadiens won the next game to polish off the Nordiques.

OT No. 3: After Montreal had defeated Buffalo 4-3 in the opener of the Adams Division finals, the two teams played three consecutive games that went into overtime with the score tied 3-3. Demers played a hunch in overtime of Game 2. Early in sudden death he threw together a makeshift line consisting of Ed Ronan and veterans Guy Carbonneau, the team captain, and Denis Savard. "I told Carbo, 'Score the winning goal,'" said Demers after the game.

He did, thanks to a nifty headlong rush by Ronan, who stuffed off an icing call less than three minutes into OT by beating Buffalo's Keith Carney to the puck in the Sabres' end. Savard retrieved the puck and flipped it to Carbonneau, who batted it past goalie Grant Fuhr for his first nonempty-net goal since Nov. 9.

OT No. 4: Though trailing two games to none, the Sabres came home for Game 3 convinced that they had played the Canadiens even. Unlike the right leg of Buffalo forward Alexander Mogilny, which had been badly broken in a second-period pileup, their hopes weren't crushed until, you guessed it, overtime.

With a little more than eight minutes gone in the extra session, Montreal defenseman Patrice Brisebois whaled on a shot from the point. The puck ricocheted through a crowd of players milling around the slot and

Quebec ahead 1-0, he set up Muller for the tying goal in the second period, and the game went into overtime. "We were desperate," says forward Gilbert Dionne now. "Quebec had so much offense and played better team defense than anyone we saw in the playoffs. We were scared."

Nine and a half minutes into the extra session, referee Bill McCreary whistled the Nordiques' Curtis Leschyshyn for slashing. A minute into the power play Damphousse spun out of traffic and shot in the general direction of goalie Ron Hextall. Gusarov, who had played a terrific game for the Nordiques, was backing into the crease when the puck glanced off his skate and the red light came on.

"That was huge," Damphousse says. "If we lose, we're down three to nothing and, basically, the series is over. Instead, we never looked back."

OT No. 7 Canadiens 2, Islanders 1

Carbonneau scored at 12:34

OT No. 2: Although Quebec also lost Game 4, the Nordiques didn't pack it in. Game 5 in Quebec City was an epic affair, the best game of the series. The tension increased after Nordique forward Scott Young's shot shattered the Plexiglas behind the Montreal net in the first period, sending a shower of shards onto the head of goal judge Wayne Skemer, who suffered minor injuries.

The action was every bit as dangerous for the players. Roy left the game with a bruised right shoulder two minutes into the second period and was not expected to return. However, the team doctors gave him a painkiller, and he led the Can-



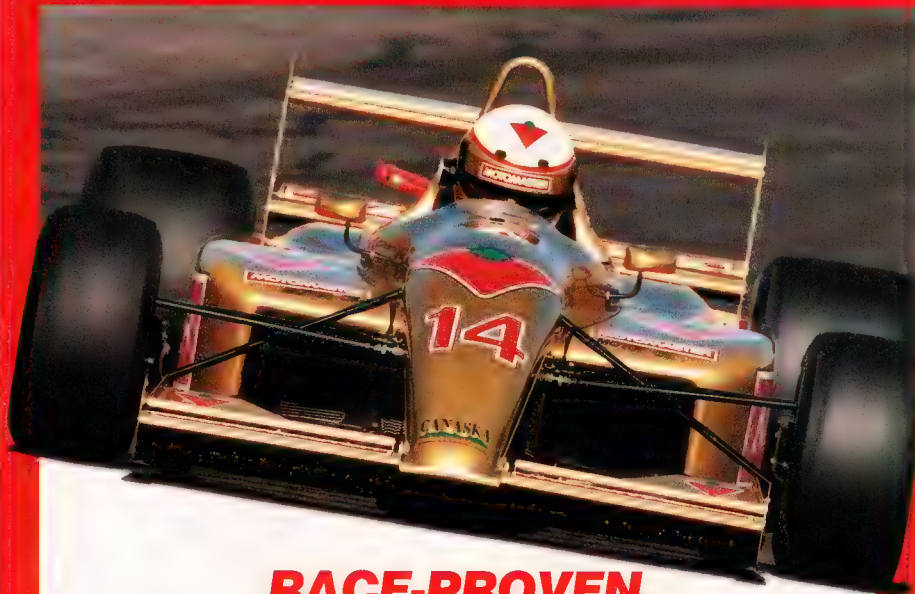
OT No. 6 Canadiens 4, Islanders 3

Lebeau scored at 6:21 of the second overtime



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OT No. 5 Canadiens 4, Sabres 3

Muller scored at 11:37

found its way into the net. The next thing anyone knew, Dionne was beating his chest and patting himself on the back.

Although replays showed that the shot had bounced into the net off LaFontaine's glove, Dionne, the man his teammates call the King for his dead-on impersonations of Elvis, took credit for sending the Sabres back to Heartbreak Hotel. The official scorer didn't disagree. "Maybe it hit LaFontaine, but it hit me after," says Dionne. "It was my goal."

OT No. 5: Now the end was near, but the Sabres didn't go down easily. With less than a minute remaining in Game 4, the Canadiens led 3-2, and Fuhr was on the bench. Suddenly, Muller found himself leading a breakaway with Carboneau on his right and nothing but ice between them and the empty net. For some reason Muller passed, and a surprised Carboneau had to go wide to get the puck, allowing the Sabres to get back into the play. He shot from an almost impossible angle, and Buffalo forward Donald Audette made the save in the crease. "Imagine screwing up a simple play like that," Muller says. "Those things usually come back to haunt you."

This one did. Fifteen seconds later the Sabres tied the score on a goal by Yuri Khmylev. Muller needed 11:37 of overtime to atone for his mistake. He beat Fuhr on a shot from the right circle. "I should have had more of a killer instinct," said Muller afterward. "Sometimes it pays to be selfish."

OT No. 6: Despite having lost Game 1 of the Wales Conference finals, the Islanders had reason to be optimistic when Game 2 at the Montreal Forum went into overtime with the score tied at—what else?—3-3. The Islanders themselves had won four straight overtime games during

this crazy postseason. The Islanders' lifetime playoff record in OT was 29-7, and they hadn't lost a postseason overtime game since 1985.

It looked as if their streak would continue and Montreal's would end when Hogue got loose on a breakaway early in the second overtime. But his shot whizzed over the crossbar. "The win was on my stick," said Hogue afterward. "I shot so hard. I couldn't believe it when I missed. God, I'd pray to have that one back."

A few minutes later New York's luck ran out when a rising shot by Montreal center Stephan Lebeau flew past the outstretched glove of goalie Glenn Healy. "We had a four-on-three, and I was trail-

ing," Lebeau says. "Vincent Damphousse left it for me, and I shot it into the top corner. I am not exactly known for my shot. That was the best one of my life."

OT No. 7: In Game 3 at Nassau Coliseum the Canadiens were going for their 11th straight playoff victory. If they got it, they would tie the single-season record streak that had been set in '92 by both the Pittsburgh Penguins and the Chicago Blackhawks. Things looked bleak for Montreal



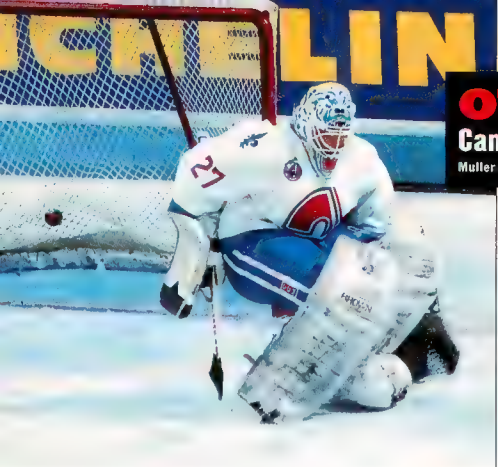
OT No. 4 Canadiens 4, Sabres 3

Dionne scored at 8:28



OT No. 3 Canadiens 4, Sabres 3

Carboneau scored at 2:50



OT No. 2 Canadiens 5, Nordiques 4

Muller scored at 8:17

cially after Carbonneau scored less than 30 seconds later to win the game 2-1. "It's very apparent," said New York coach Al Arbour, "that there are two sets of rules. One for the Montreal Canadiens, and one for everyone else."

To the Canadiens that was just sour grapes.

They had the game, they had a share of the record, and they had a 3-0 lead in the series. They went on to win it in five games.

OT No. 8: The Canadiens came out flat in the Stanley Cup finals, dropping Game 1 at home to the Kings. Then, with 1:45 left in Game 2, Montreal was trailing 2-1 and facing the unpleasant prospect of traveling to Los Angeles down two games to none. That's when Demers asked that the curve of McSorley's blade be measured. If

referee Kerry Fraser ruled that the stick was legal, the Canadiens would face a delay-of-game penalty. Fraser ruled the stick illegal, and the L.A. enforcer went off for a two-minute penalty.

Thirty-two seconds later, after Demers had gambled again by pulling Roy to gain a two-man advantage, defenseman Eric Desjardins scored his second goal of the game, to make the score 2-2. Desjardins scored again 51 seconds into OT, and the Canadiens celebrated wildly, dancing and the ghosts of the Forum.

OT No. 9: Carbonneau was one of the stars of Game 3. He set up Montreal's third goal and made a sneaky game-saving play with 12 seconds to go in regulation by falling on a loose puck in the crease that kept the score tied at 3-3. "Carbo was incredible," said Montreal's 6'2", 205-pound forward John LeClair. "He's always doing something to help the team win." The Kings were less charitable, arguing unsuccessfully that a penalty shot should have been awarded for Carbonneau's malfeasance.

LeClair, who's such a big galoot that his teammates call him Marmaduke, broke the tie by poking in his own rebound 34 seconds into overtime. Kelly Hrudey, the embattled L.A. goalie, had matched Roy brilliant save for brilliant save through most of the series. On this night, in the briefest of overtimes, he was left naked by his defenseman. "There wasn't a lot I could do," he said afterward. "I knew we were in trouble when [LeClair] got the third rebound. I was hoping he was going to miss the net or hit me."

OT No. 10: The last of the overtimes was also the best of the overtimes, a mad scramble that lasted nearly 15 glorious minutes. Again LeClair was the hero. Charging up-ice with the puck, he fired point-blank into Hrudey's pads, gathered in the rebound and set up shop behind the goal. From there he reached around and stuffed a shot into the crease. The loose puck hit L.A. defenseman Darryl Sydor, who was diving to help a sprawling Hrudey. In the blink of an eye both Sydor and the puck were in the net, and the Canadiens escaped from the Great Western Forum with a 3-2 victory and a 3-1 lead in the series. They would win the Cup two nights later in Montreal. "The big man did it," said a beaming Demers of LeClair. "He's unstoppable."

In OT, so were the Canadiens.

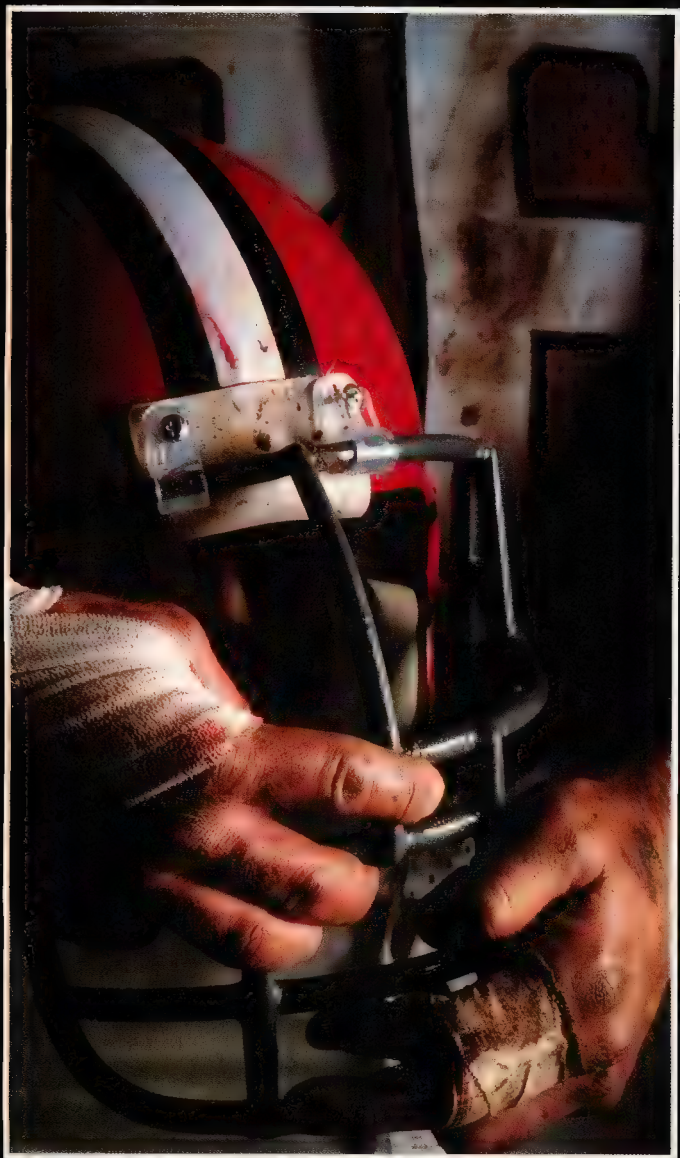
when, 80 seconds into OT, Turgeon was bearing down on the Canadian goal with no one between him and Roy. As Hogue had done the game before, Turgeon shot too high.

The Canadiens caught another break around the 12-minute mark, when none of the battle-weary on-ice officials noticed that for several seconds Montreal had two, and possibly three, extra attackers. The Islanders were furious, espe-



OT No. 1 Canadiens 2, Nordiques 1

Damphousse scored at 10:30



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A high-action photograph from a basketball game. In the foreground, Michael Jordan, wearing a white Chicago Bulls jersey with the number 23, is shown in a dynamic pose, his mouth open as if shouting or celebrating. Behind him, Scottie Pippen, also in a white Bulls jersey with the number 33, is visible. To the right, Dennis Rodman, in a dark blue Bulls jersey with the number 31, is seen from the side, looking towards the action. The background is a blurred crowd of spectators in a large arena, creating a sense of a high-stakes game.

In Sunday's epic battle Jordan, Barkley and Johnson were each embroiled in the struggle for at least 53 minutes.



Triple play

The Suns' memorable triple-overtime triumph over the Bulls in Game 3 thwarted—at least temporarily—Chicago's drive for its third consecutive NBA title | by JACK MCCALLUM



KEVIN MAZUR/GETTY IMAGES

WHILE STANDING ON THE doorstep of history, laughing and measuring themselves for Three-Peat T-shirts, the world champion Chicago Bulls were ambushed. In as unlikely a turnaround as the NBA Finals has ever seen, the Phoenix Suns, as dormant as desert cactus in losing Games 1 and 2 at home, beat the Bulls 129–121 in a memorable triple-overtime Game 3 on Sunday at Chicago Stadium.

After becoming the only Finalists in history to lose the opening two games at home, the Suns reinvented themselves as a team of heart and desire. Charles Barkley, seemingly discouraged and benumbed after Game 2, was almost giddy as he gathered his troops around him before each overtime period, patting them on the back and keeping them loose. Even before the outcome was decided, three hours and 20 minutes after the contest began, the Suns seemed to realize that they were in a game that will never be

forgotten, one that will most assuredly be held up by downtrodden teams as a beacon of inspiration.

Seventeen years earlier Phoenix was involved in the only other triple-overtime Finals game, a 128–126 loss to the Boston Celtics. This time they were going to make it right for Sun coach Paul Westphal, a player for the losers in that game.

Sunday's victory not only averted what seemed to be an almost certain sweep; it also obliterated the perception that the Suns were nothing more than one of those colorful Southwestern rugs upon which the Bulls could step en route to joining the Celtics ('58–59 through '65–66) and the Minneapolis Lakers ('51–52 through '53–54) as the only teams in NBA history to have won at least three straight titles. The series could still end in Chicago, where Games 4 and 5 were scheduled for Wednesday and Friday, but it will not end without a little more blood, sweat and tears than had been anticipated.

Indeed, before Game 3 one was hard-pressed to remember a championship se-

ries in which one team had been so suddenly and so dramatically diminished in stature as had Phoenix, which finished the regular season with the NBA's best record. Honey, the Bulls shrunk the Suns—or so it had seemed. They had turned three-point threat Dan Majerle, known in Phoenix as 'Thunder Dan, into a low-pressure system somewhere over Akron. And they had turned All-Star point guard Kevin into just another Johnson; specifically, they had turned him into grizzled 34-year-old veteran Frank Johnson, who had been called upon to direct the Suns' attack down the stretch in Game 2 after KJ had become flustered and ineffective. All in all, Games 1 and 2 had been Barkley's worst nightmare: He had played all season with the league's winningest team, only to watch it turn into his old club, the hapless Philadelphia 76ers, when June rolled around.

The most surprising comebacks in Game 3 were made by KJ and Majerle. The latter made six three-pointers, tying a Finals record, and finished with a team-high 28 points. Indeed, it was Majerle's trey from at least four paces behind the line that put Phoenix ahead for good with 3:02 remaining in the final overtime, and his two free throws with 1:09 left put the game out of reach at 125–118.

Meanwhile KJ, a candidate for the psychiatrist's couch after having more turnovers (nine) than assists (eight) in the first two games, scored 25 points and, just as important, guarded Michael Jordan effectively (box, page 32). He played 62 of the game's 63 minutes, departing only when the outcome was evidently clear.

The Suns needed every second of Majerle's and Johnson's combined 121 minutes too, because Barkley was obviously affected by the severely bruised right elbow he suffered when he hit the floor hard in Game 2. That's probably why he had only 24 points and 19 rebounds on Sunday—Finals records for someone whose shooting elbow had been drained of fluid just 30 minutes before tip-off. Still, Barkley was in an upbeat mood before, during and especially after the game, a turnaround from his state in Phoenix. And the Suns, who seemed as if they were being led to slaughter when the game began, were unquestionably the looser team down the stretch.

Barkley's jubilation in Game 3 (above) was borne of the Bulls' dominance in Phoenix.



The Bulls, by contrast, seemed fatigued and out of sorts in the overtime periods, apparently frustrated by the fact that they had left a spark of life in the seemingly extinguished Suns and burdened by the feeling that making history wouldn't be as easy as it had seemed. Had they been

overconfident? "I wouldn't even *imply* that," said Chicago guard John Paxson after Game 3. "Not in this locker room."

Well, we're not in the locker room now, so let's imply it. Perhaps *overconfident* isn't the right word. *Unfocused* might be better. Never mind the pass that Bull

center-forward Stacey King threw directly into the arms of Barkley with 1:43 left in the final overtime, giving Barkley a layup and Phoenix a 123-118 lead. That's what King does. Instead, return to the waning moments of the first quarter when, with the Bulls leading 29-25, forward Scottie

A Sun Rises and Shines

KEVIN JOHNSON, THE POINT GUARD OF THE PHOENIX SUNS, has long been an avid reader, so it is no surprise that in times of crisis he tends to turn to the printed word for solace. To help get himself back on track after a pair of woeful performances in the first two games of the 1993 NBA Finals last week, Johnson put together a rather eclectic reading list that included *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy, the Bible, the stack of messages he had recently received via fax, and the words of that renowned social critic Charles Barkley.

It's hard to say whether KJ's reading material influenced his dramatic turnaround, but all that really mattered was that after looking frustrated and confused during the Chicago Bulls' two wins in Phoenix, Johnson redeemed himself with a stellar triple-overtime effort on Sunday in Chicago. He contributed 25 points, nine assists, seven rebounds and some bothersome defense on Michael Jordan in 62 bone-wearying minutes, the most ever played in an NBA Finals game.

"I told him to let me know when he got tired," said Phoenix coach Paul Westphal. "I guess he forgot to tell me."

It's more likely that Johnson wanted as much time as he could get to erase the nightmares of the first two games of the series, during which he repeatedly tried to slash into a lane clogged with Bulls, a strategy that not only resulted in charging fouls, blocked shots and turnovers but also made him look like a kid determined to keep swinging at the neighborhood bully no matter how much blood was flowing from the kid's nose. On the Suns' flight from Phoenix to Chicago on Saturday, Johnson was trying to lose himself in *Tess* when Westphal brought him startling news: He would no longer guard Bull playmaker B.J. Armstrong; instead he would get Jordan. Johnson immediately pulled a blanket over his head and went to sleep. "I'm not sure if it was because I didn't want to think about guarding Michael or because I suddenly knew I was going to need my rest," he says.

On Sunday morning Johnson read the story of Job in the Bible. ("Job had to go through a lot," he said, "but at least God didn't visit the plague called Michael Jordan upon him.") But by that time Johnson's confidence had already been renewed, in part by dozens of faxed messages of support he had received from Sun fans, many of whom were angered that Johnson had been booed late in Game 2.

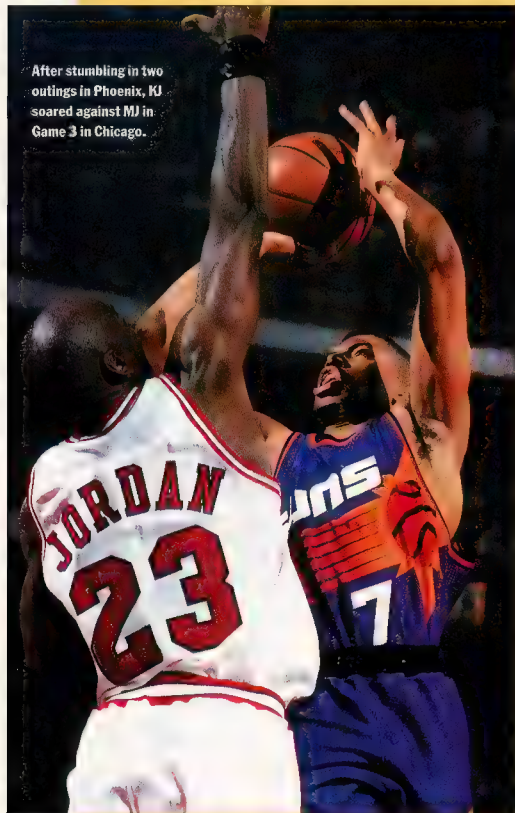
No one was more enraged than Barkley. During a press conference just after Game 2, Sir Charles railed: "If you're going to boo Kevin Johnson . . . please don't come to the game. We've come too far to put up with that crap."

"I didn't know Charles said anything like that until I read it in the papers," Johnson says. "It meant a lot to me. I can deal with what the fans say about me as long as I know I have the confidence and respect of the other guys in this locker room."

Johnson's effort on Sunday undoubtedly brought him increased respect from the Bulls, particularly Jordan, who despite scoring 44 points made only six of 20 shots in the fourth quarter and the three overtime periods. According to Jordan, Johnson has "quicker hands" than Sun guard Dan Majerle, who had had little success guarding Jordan in Games 1 and 2. "It's tougher to get the first step on him," Jordan said after Sunday's marathon. "Now it becomes a thinking game."

As he rested near his locker after the game, Johnson said he planned to write about the night he guarded Jordan. Then again, KJ had already written a new chapter for the NBA Finals, and everyone who had been ready to close the book on the series suddenly wanted to read on.

—PHIL TAYLOR



After stumbling in two outings in Phoenix, KJ soared against MJ in Game 3 in Chicago.

PETER J. ARNETT



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Pippen foolishly shot with 12 seconds left instead of letting the clock run down for a last-second effort and was charged with an offensive foul. KJ then bolted down the floor and hit a jumper at the other end with 4.3 seconds on the clock. Bull center Scott Williams threw away the subsequent inbound pass, leading to a dunk at :01.5 by Richard Dumas, the Suns' rookie forward, and a 29-29 tie.

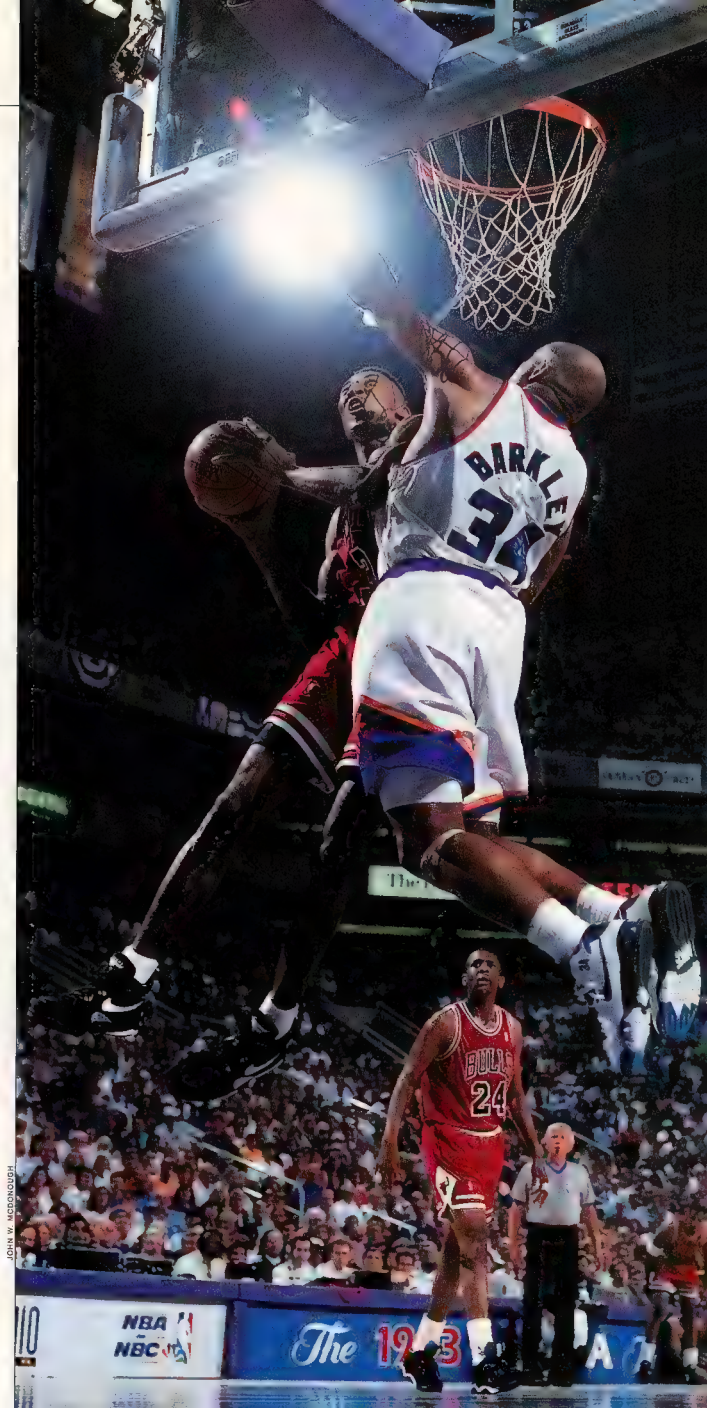
"We were focused on the sweep," said Jordan, getting points for honesty, "but we didn't do the things we needed to sweep." Like taking the ball hard to the hole. Chicago shot only nine free throws in the game (Phoenix shot 31), a fact that had many Bulls grumbling after the game. But Jordan and Pippen settled for outside jumpers far too often.

"Damn!" said Barkley, interrupting Majerle's postgame press conference. "Michael shot 43 times. [He made only 19.] That's unbelievable. He's gonna be icing his elbow too."

Perhaps that would be Barkley's last laugh, because Jordan's history has been to follow a bad shooting game with a superb one. He made only three of 18 shots from the floor in Game 3 of the Eastern Conference finals against the New York Knicks, for example, and then torched the Knicks with 54 points in Game 4, hitting 18 of 30 field goal attempts.

Then, too, Jordan was the star of Games 1 and 2 at America West Arena. Nothing the Suns did—including trotting out the NBA's most obnoxious fan (hit the road, Robin Ficker) and the airwaves' most bellicose commentator (lower the volume, Rush Limbaugh)—could stop him. Neither could the ominous implications of Richard Esquinas's book, *Michael & Me: Our Gambling Addiction . . . My Cry For Help!*, and all the peripheral distractions that came with it.

The most interesting subplot of the series was, of course, the convergence of Jordan and Barkley, the NBA's two biggest names. Both players went into Game 1, on June 9, with a bulldog press yapping at their heels, shouting questions of the tabloid kind. No, said Charles, I have not danced with Madonna, I have not slept with Madonna, I am not going out with Madonna. The reports linking Barkley with the Material Girl seemed to be the kind of thing that he might have



In Phoenix, Pippen took it to Barkley and the Suns for 42 points, 21 boards and 17 assists.

JOHN W. WOODEN



Barkley's heroics in Chicago—despite an aching elbow—were preceded by the disarming efforts of Jordan in Phoenix (right).

had fun with, but he was not amused. (He says they met quite by coincidence at a Phoenix restaurant, and that was the end of it.) Barkley's separation from his wife, Maureen, and three-year-old daughter, Christiana, is no laughing matter for him, and thus the subject of any dalliance with Madonna was not immaterial.

Jordan finally broke the media boycott he had begun before Game 3 of the New York series when he taped an interview with NBC's Ahmad Rashad, a close personal friend, that ran during halftime of Game 1. The questioning reminded no one of, say, *60 Minutes*. To summarize, Jordan, behind a pair of impenetrable shades, said he did not have a gambling problem and continued to maintain that his gambling debt with his erstwhile golfing opponent Esquinas did not run into seven figures, as Esquinas alleges. Jordan's composure during that interview and at every moment surrounding those first two games was cool and collected.

Barkley's was not. His nervousness before Game 1 was evident, and it translated into a nine-of-25 shooting performance in the Suns' 100-92 loss. Chicago put only one man on Barkley—usually Horace Grant, the league's most underrated defender—and thus was able to keep its other four players at home to protect against

Phoenix's deadly three-point shooters, Majerle and guard Danny Ainge, who together got off only five treys in the game and made just one. The following day Barkley still seemed curiously weary of all the attention, weary of carrying the Suns.

By contrast Jordan was back in form, handling questions as easily as he handled the Phoenix defense (such as it was), skillfully eluding specific inquiries about his gambling. He even admitted to getting in a round or two of golf while he was in Phoenix. (Can we please have a moratorium on reporting about NBA players and golf, except in the case of real news stories, such as the Esquinas business? No more stories about Jordan's playing golf, no more stories about Barkley's playing golf, no more stories about Jordan's playing golf with Barkley—like the one broadcast by one Phoenix television station, which aired tape of a Jordan foursome shot from a helicopter and claimed Bark-

ley had been part of the group when the player in question was, in fact, NBC commentator Quinn Buckner. After all, no one discusses hunting with baseball players or bass fishing with linemen.)

NBA commissioner David Stern said on Sunday that he is satisfied that Jordan is not a compulsive gambler. Stern seems almost as eager as Jordan to put *l'affaire Esquinas* behind him, and it will be interesting to see if that happens.

But if there was anything on Jordan's mind except establishing himself as the greatest player on one of the greatest teams in history, it was not evident in the Bulls' 111-108 Game 2 victory. He scored 42 points to go with 12 rebounds and nine assists, while making life quite gnarly for Majerle. So fresh was Jordan after his sterling all-around game that he could have probably played 18... sorry.

Barkley (42 points and 13 rebounds) was a man possessed in Game 2. His in-



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domitable will would not allow him to be embarrassed two games in a row. Jordan's efforts, as well as those of Pippen (15 points, 12 rebounds, 12 assists), were cool and cohesive, the Bulls' signature style. Barkley's efforts, by contrast, were sweaty and ultimately enervating, because he was often a one-man band, as Majerle's bad shooting (four of 14) and Kevin Johnson's horrendous floor play (four points, four turnovers) continued.

After the game came a spirited rebuke by Barkley of the home fans who had booed Johnson, which proved to be his best defense of the series. Jordan, lest we forget, can beat you with his scoring, rebounding, passing and defense, while Barkley, this year's MVP, murders you

only in the first three categories. To wit: Grant's 24-point performance in Game 2 did not negate Barkley's 42-point effort, but it certainly diminished it.

Sir Charles also issued a defense of the obnoxious Ficker, who usually haunts the visitors' bench at the Capital Centre, home of the Washington Bullets—though Barkley denied reports that he had paid for Ficker's travel and for the ticket that had placed the heckling lawyer just a couple of rows behind the Chicago bench. Ficker, with his trademark rubber chicken in hand, was finally thrown out of the arena in the fourth quarter of Game 2 after several go-rounds with NBA security.

Neither could Phoenix capitalize on the presence of Limbaugh, a close friend of Westphal's, who offered a pregame suggestion to his good buddy—run more plays to the right. (*Cue laugh track.*)

That is not exactly what the Suns did in Game 3. But they did send Johnson *around* instead of *through* the Bull defense, hoping to curb his tendency to lose the ball in heavy traffic. They also spaced themselves more judiciously when KJ drove, helping him collect nine assists. They tinkered with the matchups (Barkley on center Bill Cartwright, small forward Dumas on point guard B.J. Armstrong, in addition to Johnson on Jordan), fought hard for loose balls and challenged Jordan on every shot.

Still, at week's end the Bulls held the upper hand, needing mostly to regain that steely-eyed resolve with which they had begun the series. Anyway, it's not dignified to walk through the doors of history carrying a broom. Better to battle your way past a worthy opponent, something like a Phoenix risen from the ashes. ■

**Jordan's glistering play in Games 1 and 2—
he scored 73 points—had Phoenix sweating.**





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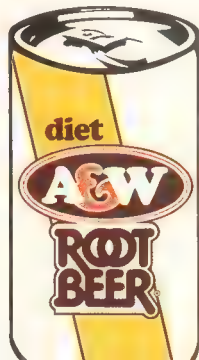
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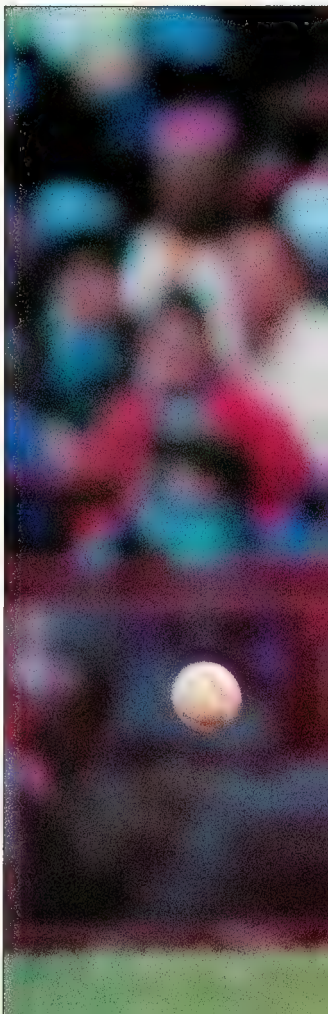
With son Brian hitting .300 and his Royals in first place, Hal McRae can enjoy life as a manager | by TIM KURKJIAN

through Sunday had won 13 of their last 19 games, are now raving about losses. Back on April 26 the Royals were 7-12, McRae supposedly was in danger of losing his job, and anyone who witnessed the fury he unleashed in his office after a particularly frustrating 5-3 loss to the Detroit Tigers was in danger—period.

But last Saturday night, there was McRae saying, "How can you hang your head over a game like this? Now, if we had been playing bad baseball, you could probably classify this one as an agonizing loss. But we're still playing good baseball. We're still in first place."

First place? Who would have thought the Royals, a team that lost its first five games of the season and nine of its first 11, would be in first place by 1½ games in the American League West in mid-June? Even in this weak division, a disastrous start could have buried Kansas City for the second year in a row. (Its 1-16 start in '92 set the stage for a 72-90 season.)

But this time the Royals have turned their season around, and the reasons were clear in Saturday night's marathon. The heart of the upgraded Kansas City defense—shortstop Greg Gagne, a free-agent signee, and second baseman Jose Lind, acquired from the Pittsburgh Pirates—made four fabulous plays against Chicago. The reliable rotation contributed a 7½-inning stint by crafty No. 5 starter Chris Haney (3-0). The solid, veteran bullpen allowed one run in 7½ innings, including three perfect frames by the best closer in the American League this year, Jeff Montgomery, who threw 20 strikes in 25 pitches. The Royals' only run came in the seventh inning in typical fashion: bloop double, sacrifice bunt, two-out sin-



JEFF PHELPS

TALK ABOUT TOUGH LOSSES. Look at what happened to the Kansas City Royals last Saturday night. In dropping a 15-inning, four-hour-and-13-minute pitchers' duel 2-1 to the Chicago White Sox, the Royals went 1 for 13 with runners in scoring position; lost to a 29-year-old rookie pitcher, Jeff Schwarz, who had never won a major league game; lost consecutive games for the first time since May 4; and had their streak of victories in one-run games stopped at 10. Moments after the game ended, K.C. manager Hal McRae strode into his office, sat down, slapped his hands down on his desk and...

No, he didn't fire a tape recorder across the room, kick his TV or scream obscenities for three minutes while brandishing a bottle of vodka. He smiled and said, in all sincerity, "Best game of the year. Memorable game. We don't lose any momentum losing a game like that. I would have paid to see a game like that. I can sleep tonight. We played a brave game."

Whew! How times have changed in Kansas City, where the Royals, who

This year Brian is more relaxed playing for his dad, who, since venting his spleen in April, has learned to laugh off the (few) losses.

gle. K.C. didn't make an error, and its five pitchers walked only one batter—on an intentional pass. In other words, the Royals, as usual, didn't beat themselves.

In fact, they bounced back on Sunday and defeated the White Sox 5-4 in another extra-inning test, with 40-year-old designated hitter George Brett putting on an offensive show. His two RBI singles helped stake K.C. starter Kevin Appier to a 4-0 lead after three innings. Then, with one out in the 10th, Brett stroked what appeared to be a routine single to left cen-

ter—his fourth hit of the game—and he ran it into a double. Two batters later Kevin McReynolds drilled a single to left, scoring Brett with the winning run. It was the Royals' 20th one-run victory of the year, tops in the major leagues.

"It was fun touching home and seeing everyone run out of the dugout," Brett said. "It was like the good old days. And it's been like the good old days around here for the last month and a half."

Yes, Kansas City, which spent much of the late 1970s and early '80s ruling its divi-

sion, is getting the timely hit, making the big play in the field and getting dependable pitching again. No, the Royals are *not* winning solely because McRae trashed his office two months ago. As centerfielder Brian McRae, Hal's son, says, "We were ready to explode at that time anyway." But while Hal's outburst didn't make anyone play better, it did establish him, for the first time, as a man ready to take charge of his team.

"Hal was miserable and frustrated, and we weren't responding to being 2-9," says





Brett's fourth hit on Sunday was a leg double; moments later he scored the winning run.

pitcher David Cone. "He told us, 'If the worst thing that happens is I get fired, I'm O.K. To hell with everyone else.' There was a lot of anger there. He needed to vent it. When he did, we thought, He really does have some fire. It's the old Mac."

Indeed, the tirade was cathartic for McRae. "For the first time, I felt free... free to do the job I was hired to do," he says. "There were a lot of restraints and obstacles hindering me—what they are, or were, isn't important. I was boxed in. After that night I felt better about myself, my job. For me to be a good manager, I had to be in charge, and everyone had to know that."

The players got the message, and since then they have played the kind of baseball McRae did during his 17-year career: intelligent and hard-nosed, fundamentally sound and without flair. The Royals are virtually starless. They don't have Tony Gwynn. But they have his younger brother, Chris, who at week's end was hitting .325 as a platoon leftfielder. They hit doubles instead of 500-foot homers. They bunt, they execute the hit-

and-run, they slap grounders to the right side to move the runner to third. "We're kind of boring," says Montgomery.

The only time Kansas City's leading run producer, catcher Mike Macfarlane (team-high nine home runs and 32 RBIs), has gotten a lot of attention this season came last month when he smashed an umbrella that a Fenway Park fan had used in trying to scoop up a wild pitch that was still in play. "He bopped me on the head with it," says Macfarlane. "The Boston police asked me if I wanted to press charges. No way. The last thing I need is some umbrella-wielding psycho stalking me on the streets of Boston."

But when the Royals beat the Red Sox 5-3 on Umbrella Night, they started a five-game winning streak that by June 3 had boosted them into sole possession of first place for the first time since April 16, 1988. "We're not special in any part of our game, we just silently win by one run," says backup catcher Brent Mayne. "These one-run wins are unbelievable character builders."

Kansas City's lead character is still Brett, who says he isn't the least bit surprised by the turnaround. "We're not doing this with mirrors," he says. "It had

nothing to do with Hal's tirade. We're just playing good baseball. Everyone on the team is contributing. Like Jose Lind goes out with pneumonia—or, as he calls it, *ammonia*—and Rico Rossy comes up from the minors and hits a homer in his first at bat."

The biggest contributor has been Brian McRae. Through Sunday he was hitting .304 with 20 extra-base hits and a team-leading 14 stolen bases, and he was running down everything hit to centerfield. Last season Brian, 25, batted .223, the lowest average in the major leagues among qualifiers for a batting title. "He has been amazing," says Hal, who worked with Brian on hitting mechanics this spring. "I thought he'd be a .270 guy. He has matured a lot."

Brian says he has made an even bigger adjustment in his mental approach to the game. "Now I'm confident, even a little cocky," he says. "Last year I was a little unsure. We played so bad, everything got to me. But now I go to the plate thinking, This pitcher isn't better than I am. Last year I did what everyone wanted me to do instead of what I'm best at. I got the most walks in my career [42], but my average went down 40 points. Now I don't care if the pitch is over my head or in the dirt, if I think I can hit it, I'm swinging."

Brian is also more relaxed playing for his father. In 1991, in his first full season, he was struggling to make it in the major leagues. Two months into that season Hal replaced the fired John Wathan as manager, giving the Royals two McRaes trying to adapt. Father and son were spending more time together than at any other time in their lives, and it took some getting used to. They get along well now, but they see each other only at the park. "I don't even know the phone number at his apartment," Brian says.

They both see a lot of Montgomery, who after 29 appearances this season was tied with five other stoppers for the major league lead with 19 saves. Montgomery doesn't have an overpowering fastball, a knee-buckling curve or pinpoint control, but he does have what few closers can claim: four pitches (fastball, curve, slider, changeup) that he can throw for strikes.

Like Hal, Brian blew his top.



A surrealist painting of a face. The face is composed of various textures and colors, including dark purple, green, and yellow. The mouth is a large, dark, textured opening. There is a small, light-colored, fleshy protrusion on the chin. The background is a mottled green and yellow with dark, textured elements.

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Montgomery came to Kansas City in a 1988 trade with the Cincinnati Reds for outfielder Van Snider—one of the most lopsided deals in the last 10 years. He says he asked Murray Cook, who was then the Reds' general manager, why he was being traded after having pitched only 19½ innings (with a 6.52 ERA) in '87. "Murray told me that Pete [Rose, then the Red manager] gave him a list of half a dozen guys who he said would never play for him, and I was one of them," says Montgomery. "Pete said I lacked the mental toughness to play in the big leagues."

Mental toughness? "He's among the first I'd pick if I were going to war," says Macfarlane. Through last week Montgomery had 134 saves, a 2.37 ERA and one All-Star Game appearance as a Royal. His save totals have gone up over the last five seasons 1-18-24-33-39. If he saves 40 this year, he will become only the second pitcher ever to increase his save total six years running (the first was former Oriole Sammy Stewart, 1979-84). Finally, Montgomery is getting some recognition. "My first three or four years here," he says, "I could walk around town virtually unnoticed."

So could most of the rest of the Royals, except, of course, Brett, who remains an icon in Kansas City. A surefire first-ballot Hall of Famer, Brett has played the game brilliantly—with grace, flair and passion—for 20 years, but he says this season might be his last. He doesn't want his final at bat to be a home run or a line-drive single but a groundout to the second baseman in which he busts his butt running to first, then turns to the rookies in the dugout and says, "That's how the game is played."

"Every time I go 0 for 4, I want to retire," he says. "Every time I get three hits, I want to play. Every time I do something to help us win, I want to play. Every time I feel over-matched up there—that's a lot—I want to retire."

Through Sunday, Brett was still hitting in his customary No. 3 hole, had 31 RBIs and, after his four hits on Sunday, was batting .250. Three weeks ago, when Hal McRae told him he was doing a great job,

Brett replied, "What in the hell are you talking about? I'm hitting .240."

"Hal told me, 'I don't care if you hit .220, your job now is to produce runs,'" Brett says.

The ease with which McRae now moves among his players, including a former teammate like Brett, is partly the result of Royal owner Ewing Kauffman's having sent him to a leadership seminar in the off-season. McRae, who's the first to admit that he wasn't a good manager at first, went gladly. "The seminar helped me understand how to deal with my bosses, my peers, my subordinates," he says. "I was badly prepared when I came in, but I'm learning. You need methods, procedures. It taught me to categorize individuals, and how to deal with them."

A career .290 hitter who appeared in eight league championship series and four World Series, McRae was a winner as a player—and now he's finally winning as a manager. "I don't understand how you can have fun in this job when you're losing more than you're winning," he says. "I manage to win, not just to manage. You play golf to play golf. But golf isn't my profession, this is. And I'm enjoying it."

Reliever Montgomery shuts down the opposition but allows Connor, 3, to take his cuts.



DAVID LAM PYLE



JOHN SEVER



Alexandre The Great?

There are doubts about Alexandre Daigle's ability, but his fan appeal should make him the top NHL draft pick

by MICHAEL FARBER

THE URBAN SPRAWL OF Montreal had given way to fields and horse pastures, and if Alexandre Daigle, the best junior hockey player in the world, can't be sure where he is going until the June 26 NHL draft, a visitor to the suburb of St. François in Laval was just as uncertain about where he was going. This was supposed to be a trip to the next town, not the next time zone. Finally, a gas station loomed on the right.

"Rue Marius Barbeau?" asked the visitor.

"No problem," said the attendant. "What are you looking for?"

"Alexandre Daigle's house."

"You from Ottawa?"

Even before Eric Lindros, the last junior hockey player to stir up a fuss, had played a game for the Philadelphia Flyers, his autobiography, *Fire on Ice*, was available at a bookstore near you. The best book ever written about an athlete-in-progress was John McPhee's 1965 masterpiece about Princeton's Bill Bradley, *A Sense of Where You Are*. Daigle is neither Lindros-tough nor U.S. Senator Bradley-smart, but if there is a book in his immediate future, it should be entitled *A Sense of Where You Will Be*.

The personal file on Daigle is distinctly

meager, as befits anyone who has become a personage before he actually has become a person. The 18-year-old Daigle lives with his parents during the summers and—here's a scoop—likes cars, girls and music. But his hockey file is thick. Barring a major surprise, he will be the first player selected at the NHL draft in Quebec City next Saturday. The NHL's Central Scouting ranked him as the best junior prospect in North America, and no 18-year-old European player comes close. The consensus is that Daigle, a center, is the most talented player to come out of Quebec since Mario Lemieux in 1984—better even than the New York Islanders' Pierre Turgeon, the first player chosen in the 1987 draft.

"Daigle is going to be a franchise player," says Pierre Dorion, scouting director for the Toronto Maple Leafs.

But for which franchise?

Of course, every year brings the ritual maneuvering about the No. 1 pick, the feints and the phony deals and the con jobs that form the backdrop of the hockey, football and basketball drafts. However, Daigle will not turn into another Lindros, Quebec's first choice in 1991, who refused to play for the Nordiques. Lindros's bizarre case wound up in the hands of an arbitrator after Nordique president Marcel Aubut, the man who wouldn't



SCOTT LEVY/BENNETT STUDIOS

The Senators, who would love to have a francophone star, say Daigle is their man.

take yes for an answer, struck deals for him with both the Flyers and the New York Rangers last June. But if you think the scheming for the right to pick Daigle is extraordinary, well, it ain't just your machinations.

The difference between Daigle and the typical can't-miss 18-year-old is this: Daigle is a Quebecer, a French-speaking star. That alone makes him a distinctive prize in the NHL, more valuable to some franchises than to others.

Ottawa, which holds the No. 1 draft pick, counted Francophones as 8% of its 1992-93 season-ticket base, but team president and general manager Randy Sexton says that 30% of the Senators' market is bilingual. The presence of Daigle on the team could cut into Montreal Canadian country in western Quebec,

First, but Not Always the Best

IT WAS HIGH NOON ON A FESTIVE June day at the Montreal Forum in 1983, and Lou Nanne was about to make the mistake of his life. Striding to the podium, Nanne opened the NHL entry draft by announcing that the Minnesota North Stars would select Brian Lawton, a center from Mount St. Charles, R.I., with the No. 1 pick.

Strobe lights flashed as Lawton, the first U.S.-born player ever taken No. 1, held a North Star jersey to his chest and grinned from ear to ear. Soon, Pat LaFontaine was proud to be a New York Islander. Steve Zer-

man went to the Detroit Red Wings.

Nanne, then the North Star general manager, figured he had the right guy. "We thought Lawton was the most complete player in the draft," Nanne said recently. "Obviously, he didn't progress like we thought."

That's putting it mildly. Ten years later Lawton is out of hockey, Nanne is a Minnesota investment broker and the North Stars are moving to Dallas. While a bad pick won't necessarily destroy a franchise, it can clear the path to ruin.

On the whole Nanne's record was pretty good. He picked Bobby Smith

first overall for the North Stars in 1978, and he took Mike Modano in '88. But Lawton is the one whom everybody remembers. He's probably the second-biggest bust in the history of the draft, behind defenseman Greg Joly, a blunder committed by the Washington Capitals in 1974:

"There's a great deal of pressure," says John Ferguson, player-personnel director for the Ottawa Senators, who earned the No. 1 pick this year with a miserable debut season. "You can't afford to make a mistake."

In any sport, scouting is an inexact science, but in the NHL scouts have

create interest on the other side of the Ottawa River and help fill the 18,500-seat Palladium, the new arena Ottawa hopes to build for the 1995-96 season. Sexton has said Ottawa will not trade the choice.

Meanwhile, Quebec, which also has designs on a new building, has a Daigle "strategy," according to assistant general manager Gilles Léger. Léger has talked trade with John Ferguson, Ottawa's director of player personnel, despite the Senators' stated intention not to trade the No. 1 pick. The Nordiques lost to Montreal in six games in the Adams Division semifinal, and Quebec coach and general manager Pierre Pagé threw a fit on the bench in Game 6 that was directed primarily at Mats Sundin, Valeri Kamensky, Andrei Kovalenko and Martin Rucinsky—Europeans all—for their lackluster play. It escaped no one's attention that the team with the fleur-de-lis on its sweaters had only five French-speaking players from Quebec, none of whom are stars of the first order. With the draft in his backyard, Aubut, a showman, would like to corner Daigle and take a bow.

Finally, the Canadiens too have been without a francophone superstar, other than goaltender Patrick Roy, since Guy Lafleur retired in 1984. There has been no one to continue the tradition—Rocket Richard to Jean Béliveau to Lafleur—that has fueled the mythology of hockey's most successful franchise. Canadian managing director Serge Savard is the ultimate conservative, and his team, despite their winning the Stanley Cup, does not have the obvious expendable assets that the Nordiques do. But Savard would love

to get Daigle and is not beyond a little homeboy plotting himself.

And how does Daigle feel about being treated as an asset instead of a kid? "That's the business. I understand how it works," he says. "I just want to play in the NHL and be the Guy. I won't be the Big Guy. Lindros is six-four, 235. He's the Big Guy. But I want to be the Guy. If you play hockey, why wouldn't you want to be that, the chance to be an important player in the NHL?"

And if he had his choice of where to play? Well, Ottawa would be great, because he could be the team's best player right away. Quebec could use a prominent Francophone, and a trade to Montreal would definitely be heavy, although guys his age like the sun, and the Kings' Luc Robitaille looks like he's having so much fun in Los Angeles. The Mighty Ducks of Anaheim would also be cool, because Daigle could also study dramatic arts and get into acting.

"Beverly Hills, 90210," Daigle says. "I could be in the French class."

Daigle does bear more than a passing resemblance to Luke Perry, *le mufin de stud* of the TV show. Daigle has the mid-ear-length sideburns, the flashing eyes, the smile, a taut six-foot, 165-pound body. Soon he will have the bank account. The jumping-off point in contract negotiations figures to be close to \$1 million a year. Daigle will be able to pay off the mortgage on his parent's modest home 20 minutes northeast of Montreal. St. François is a tran-

quil, homey sort of place. "We don't have anything," Daigle says. "Just a barber shop. When you're 14, 15, 16 years old, it's not too bad. But when I grew up, I got to Victoriaville [a town of 22,000 where he played junior hockey] and saw all these big things. When you get back home [to St. François], it seems quite small."

Draft Picks and Pans

All players of qualifying age became eligible for the draft in 1969. Here are the No. 1 picks since then, and another prominent player who was also available each year.

YEAR	TEAM	PLAYER	COULD HAVE PICKED
1969	Montreal	Rejean Houle	Bobby Clarke*
1970	Buffalo	Gilbert Perreault*	Darryl Sittler*
1971	Montreal	Guy Lafleur*	Marcel Dionne*
1972	Islanders	Billy Harris	Steve Shutt
1973	Islanders	Denis Potvin*	Lanny McDonald*
1974	Washington	Greg Joly	Bryan Trottier
1975	Philadelphia	Mel Bridgman	Dave Taylor
1976	Washington	Rick Green	Mike Liut
1977	Detroit	Dale McCourt	Mike Bossy*
1978	Minnesota	Bobby Smith	None Comparable
1979	Colorado	Rob Ramage	Ray Bourque
1980	Montreal	Doug Wickenheiser	Neske Savard
1981	Winnipeg	Dale Hawerchuk	Grant Fuhr
1982	Boston	Gord Kluzak	Scott Stevens
1983	Minnesota	Brian Lawton	Steve Yzerman
1984	Pittsburgh	Mario Lemieux	None Comparable
1985	Toronto	Wendel Clark	Joe Nieuwendyk
1986	Detroit	Joe Murphy	Brian Leetch
1987	Buffalo	Pierre Turgeon	Joe Sakic
1988	Minnesota	Mike Modano	Jeremy Roenick
1989	Quebec	Mats Sundin	None Comparable
1990	Quebec	Owen Nolan	Felix Potvin
1991	Quebec	Eric Lindros	None Comparable
1992	Tampa Bay	Roman Hamrlik	Darius Kasparaitis

*Hall of Famer



Joly, first pick in '74, may have been the biggest bust in NHL draft history.

Daigle also knows the big city. He first skated in Montreal at age eight when his mother, Francine, took him to an arena. Eight is an obscenely late age to put any Quebec child on skates, especially one whose wheels now have scouts in a tizzy. "The big thing is his acceleration, his extra gear," Léger says. "His legs make him exciting. He's the kind of player who pulls you out of the seat, and that's worth money in any game." Daigle's father, Jean-

Yves, had already tried Walter Gretzky's womb-to-the-Hall-of-Fame approach with his older son, Sebastien. The backyard ice. The works. "My dad wanted another Guy Lafleur, but Sebastien's the opposite of me, he doesn't like sports," Daigle says. "My father said, 'A second one? Forget it.' I remember I hadn't been playing hockey long, and my father came to watch one day. He told me, 'You are the worst skater of all the hockey players I

to imagine what a raw 18-year-old will look like when he's 22. 'It's a no-win situation,' says Neil Smith, general manager of the New York Rangers. "If you make the right pick, you never get any credit for it. And if you blow it, people will say, 'How in the world could they possibly have blown that pick?'"

Ferguson, though, is certain he's not going to blow it next week. "The secret is, you have to find the best player," he says. "And the best player this year is Alexandre Daigle."

That remains to be seen.

—JON SCHER

have ever seen in my life.' I guess I was."

Alexandre says that when he scored 150 goals as a pee wee, his father's opinion of him changed.

Daigle was the first player taken in the midget draft, and as a 16-year-old with the Victoriaville Tigres, he had 35 goals and 110 points—ninth among Quebec league scorers. He entered the '92-93 season with three personal goals: to be selected first in the NHL's entry draft; to surpass Mario Lemieux's 184 points as a 17-year-old (Daigle turned 18 on Feb. 7); and to become the 11th member of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League (QMJHL) 200-point club, joining such luminaries as Lafleur, Lemieux, Pierre Larouche and Pat LaFontaine. Daigle was averaging 3½ points through the first 22 games; Lemieux's record 282, set in '83-84, seemed remote but not impossible.

Then on Nov. 8 a rash act by Daigle effectively killed two of his goals. Ironically, it enhanced the third, the chance of being picked No. 1. That night Daigle ran Drummondville defenseman Denis Gauthier from behind, taking several strides and then leading with a flying elbow. Gauthier hit the ice and spent a night in the hospital with a concussion. Maurice Filion, the QMJHL vice-president, suspended his league's meal ticket for eight games. Still, Daigle's hit forced scouts to notice something they had missed during his run of three-point nights: The kid had a mean streak.

This quality is highly prized by the men with the clipboards. Ottawa's Ferguson, the former Canadian enforcer, was mightily impressed with the suspension. Que-

bec junior players have been stereotyped as smaller and softer than other Canadian juniors—520 Quebec leaguers have been drafted since 1969, 691 fewer players than those from the Ontario Hockey League and 444 fewer than from the Western Hockey League—but now the most prominent player in the league had shown he could strafe as well as skate and score.

To prove it was no fluke, Daigle elbowed Denis Beauchamp of the St. Jean Lynx in the dying seconds of a game three weeks later and was sat down for another two games. “I got a lot of publicity from my suspensions,” says Daigle, who after getting his third game misconduct on Feb. 26 was suspended for yet another match. “There was a lot of pressure on me. I guess 137 points [45 goals and 92 assists in 53 games this season] would have been good by someone else’s standard, but I was frustrated. With missing all those games, I couldn’t get the numbers.”

The Senators’ enthusiasm for him, however, has not dimmed. After Daigle dominated the Canadian Hockey League All-Star Game, on Jan. 19 at the Montreal Forum, with four assists, great legs and some second-period hits, a photo in *Le Journal de Montréal* featured Daigle and Ferguson in a locker room handshake.

No matter which team drafts him, Daigle will leave his suburban hometown for the big city.

The Senators invited Daigle and their Quebec league draft choices from last year to Ottawa for the final game of the year, one more photo opportunity impossible for the hockey world to miss. But the courtship seemed too public. Some NHL teams thought Ferguson was simply trying to increase the value of the No. 1 pick.

“The Fergy Suspicion Factor, right?” says Sexton. “I will say this. Whoever we draft first, we’re going to sign him and put him in an Ottawa uniform. I was asked, What if the Nordiques offered Sundin and [Joe] Sakic for the pick? My feeling is that if someone wants it so badly, it’s probably worth keeping.”

With all the positives, there are still some whispers about Daigle. After Victoriaville coach Pierre Aubry was fired Feb. 22—his relationship with his star was cool—Daigle was viewed as a coach killer. After the Tigres were knocked out in the first round of the QMJHL playoffs in April, Daigle was seen as incapable of carrying a team.

“Sure he’s talented and charismatic,” says one NHL scout, “but he often came across as arrogant. The newspapers build him up too much. He was by far the best player in the first half, but he got tired down the end. He wasn’t solid in the stretch, and he certainly wasn’t dominant in the playoffs. You expect a superstar to carry the team, and I didn’t see his enthu-

siasm. He looked passive. He shied away in the playoffs, slowed down in the offensive zone, gave the puck away. People are making a lot of his feistiness, but a lot of it was just frustration. What is being called feistiness was often just bad penalties.”

For the past two months Daigle has been mostly sleeping in and working out, wondering where his first million will be coming from. The 90210 in Beverly Hills is at least one zero short. Daigle has studied English, and though his isn’t perfect, he has as solid a command of the language as some of Luke Perry’s hockey-minded pals at West Beverly High, who probably think they’re speaking the Los Angeles Kings’ English.

As a member of the MuchMusic generation, Daigle is used to things happening fast, fast, fast, and the early loss in the playoffs has made the predraft days seem endless. There is only so much pool to shoot, so much pickup baseball to play. He says he thinks, thinks, thinks about the draft, but that doesn’t make June 26 come any faster.

“I want to sign a contract, change my life, my style of life, change my city,” says Daigle. “A guy my age, you want to do that. My parents, people in their 40’s, they don’t want to change their lives. But people my age, we want change.”

The games began a long time ago. Let the draft begin. ■



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Sports People

IN THE KITCHEN MOM IS TURNING THE sizzling turkey sausage with a spatula. While biscuits turn golden brown in the oven, in another skillet egg whites and potatoes slowly fry. "Tommy has to have his country breakfast when he comes home," Diana

Morrison is saying, smiling as mothers have always smiled when their sons return from the wars and are safely asleep in their bedrooms.

Five days have passed since Tommy Morrison's June 7, 12-round victory over former heavyweight champion George Foreman in Las Vegas, and along Highway 20, the main street of Jay, a little town tucked into the northeast corner of Oklahoma, the homemade signs and banners—WELCOME HOME, TOM; WELL DONE, TOMMY; GREAT JOB, TOM—are swaying in a pleasant breeze. The day before, the folks in Jerry's Drive-In Diner talked about holding a parade. A visitor, looking out the café's window at the two-lane highway, wondered where they would hold it. "They start right out there," said Betty Fields, a retired high school teacher, pointing to a spot just down the road from the diner. "Then they go down to the stop sign, turn left, go around the courthouse square and then left again on the highway to the Wal-Mart."

Over on Cherokee Street, Diana spent that day like the rest of Jay, waiting for Tommy to come marching home. After a three-day stopover in Kansas City, where he now lives, Morrison drove 198 miles to Jay, because he had promised Brook Netherton, a high school friend, that he would be at her wedding on Saturday afternoon.

Whipping Foreman, and suddenly standing near the top of a woefully short list of opponents for heavyweight champions Riddick Bowe and Lennox Lewis, has earned Morrison a lot of attention. Part of it has to do with his complexion. Diana, who is a full-blooded Indian—half Otoe, half Ponca—gets annoyed when she hears Tommy called the Great White Hope (Tim Morrison, whom she divorced in 1980, is white). "Why don't they call him the Great Native American Hope?" she asks, more mocking than serious. "Or at least half a Great White Hope. It's all so silly."

When Diana was a child, her father, John Harrison, taught her how to hook and jab. Harrison was a former Golden Gloves champion, and Diana dreamed of being a boxer. It didn't happen, so she focused her ring ambitions on Tommy. When he was 10, she took a needle and some India ink and

Tommy Morrison



tattooed boxing gloves onto his left biceps. "Took me two hours," she says. "He flinched and ouches a lot, but I got them done." In high school Tommy set his amateur boxing aside to play basketball and football. He even had a cougar tattooed over the boxing gloves on his arm. A linebacker at Jay High, he was weighing scholarship offers from three small colleges when Diana finally sat him down to get his priorities in order. "Look," she said. "Winning the Golden Gloves is a family tradition. On the one hand you have college, which will always be there. On the other you have the Golden Gloves in Kansas City, which is now or never. Think about it."

Tommy chose boxing. He won in Kansas City and



turned pro on Nov. 10, 1988. Over the next three years, which included a six-month pause in 1990 to play a fighter in *Rocky V*, he won his first 28 fights, 24 by knockout. Then, on Oct. 18, 1991, he fought Ray Mercer, who had beaten him 5-0 at the 1988 Olympic trials. Mercer knocked him out in the fifth round. "I had done a lot of drinking and partying in high school, and some of it had carried over into my boxing career," says Morrison, whose carefree approach to training had finally caught up with him.

Now, says Morrison, "if Mercer were here, I'd hug him to death. That fight was the best thing ever to happen to me." Morrison KO'd his next eight opponents. For Foreman, the strategy designed by

Morrison's trainer, Tommy Virgets, was to hit the lumbering ex-champion before he could get set and then to walk away. It was ugly, but all three judges had Morrison winning by at least seven points.

Having finished breakfast, Tommy stands up and stretches. "God, it's good to come home. No matter what you achieve, you come home and everything is normal." A half hour later he is standing at Main and 5th, site of an eight-month-old traffic light, the only one in town. Some of the 2,500 citizens of Jay begin to pile out of their pickup trucks, a few with cameras, others with pens and blank paper. For Tommy Morrison, coming home will never be quite normal again.

—PAT PUTNAM

George Foreman's conqueror takes a hearty bite out of life as a hometown hero.

Bruny Surin



As the world
indoor 100 champ
runs faster, his
countrymen get
more skeptical.

DANA MONTGOMERY/ALAMY

NO MATTER HOW FAST HE RUNS OR WHAT TITLES he wins, Bruny Surin may never outrun Ben Johnson's shadow. Surin, the Montreal sprinter who won the indoor world championship in March in Toronto, is finding that his countryman's disgrace has made Canadians deeply suspicious of any track athlete's sudden success. "I've got friends in France who call me the King," Surin says. "They assume that in Montreal I can have anything I want, that I drive a Ferrari. It isn't true."

A Ferrari? Surin would settle for a shoe contract. The only sponsor he has is Videotron, the Montreal-based cable television company, whose owner, Claude Chagnon, is a former distance running champion. Though he has every reason to be bitter, it is a measure of Surin's selflessness that he sees the Johnson affair first as a tragedy for Canada and only secondarily

as a tragedy for himself. Surin has none of the sense of entitlement that often accompanies athletic greatness, perhaps because his accomplishments have been so unexpected. Surin, 25, was born in Haiti and immigrated to Canada at the age of seven. To his family he was "*Le Petit*," a scrawny little boy whose first sporting love was basketball. "I've got a good vertical leap," he says.

All that leaping caught the attention of Daniel Ste.-Hilaire, the coach of the Montreal International track club, and after only one year of working under him, Surin finished 12th in the triple jump at the world junior championships in Athens in 1986. Two years later, at the Seoul Olympics, he long-jumped 7.74 meters, failing to qualify for the final by three centimeters. He was facing a bright future as a long jumper, but the event left his legs sore. He decided to try sprinting, which did not take the same toll on his legs.

In 1989, his first year as a sprinter, Surin's best time at 100 meters plummeted from 10.71 seconds to 10.14. Coming only a year after Johnson's forfeiture of the gold medal at the Seoul Olympics, Surin's remarkable improvement set off warning bells. "All the reporters said, 'Who is this guy? It might be another one on drugs,'" Surin recalls.

Surin's explanation is far less sinister. "I had been a jumper," he says. "My coach would say, 'O.K., let's go do a 100.' But I never practiced it. When I ran 10.7, it was practicing for jumping."

Surin's best dropped to 10.07 in 1991 and to 10.05 two weeks before the Olympics. He finished fourth in Barcelona, running 10.09 in the final and missing a bronze medal by .05. Surin looks back on that race as a disappointment. He was leading the field at 50 meters when self-doubt set in.

"I knew in my mind, This cannot be!" Surin says. "It was like I was waiting for them to catch me. I turned to my right to see where they were, and the race was over."

Needing to find a way to conquer that second 50, Surin sought out sports psychologist Wayne Halliwell. "He teaches me the things I can control and the things I cannot," Surin says. "[In the

blocks] I don't worry about who's on my left and who's on my right. I just focus on what I have to do."

Surin also acquired a new coach last summer, Los Angeles-based Tony Campbell, whose best-known pupil is Dennis Mitchell, the man who finished one place ahead of Surin in Barcelona. While Halliwell works on Surin's head, Campbell sees Surin's weak finish as a failure of conditioning and has persuaded him to incorporate longer sprints—200s and 300s—into his workouts.

All the while Surin must contend with the skeptics. Carl Lewis, for one, sympathizes with the pressure Surin faces. "Here you've got this great sprinter, and all people want to talk about is a guy who cheated," says Lewis. "I just hope Bruny sticks in there and tries to improve, so that at the end of his career people forget about Ben Johnson and recognize Bruny as the greatest sprinter Canada has ever had." —MERRELL NODEN



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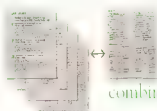


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Sports People



THE MOST IMPORTANT thing to understand about Bill Robinson, the hottest harness racing trainer in North America, is that he's going to do things his way, and he doesn't give a damn what anybody thinks about it. Everybody got that? He has no patience with drivers who screw up the trotters and pacers he prepares so diligently, which explains why he fired three of them after one race earlier this year. And as for rivals who question his methods, Robinson sneers and says, "I enjoy whipping their butts every chance I get."

That being the case, this could be the most enjoyable year of a career in which Robinson, 46, has risen from factory worker to miracle worker. Of the 20 top-ranked standardbreds in North America, half come from Robinson's 50-acre farm in Hagersville, Ont. The best of them is Presidential Ball, a 3-year-old pacer who most likely will be favored in Canada's most prestigious harness race, the \$1 million North America Cup on June 26 at Toronto's Greenwood Raceway. Robinson won the cup in 1991 with Precious Bunny, who went on to earn \$2.2 million that year, a record for a 3-year-old. Precious Bunny was the horse that put Robinson at the top of the game, and he also was the one that was mainly

responsible for all the gossip and rumors that swirl around Robinson to this day.

Until his breakthrough with Precious Bunny, Robinson was regarded by followers of harness racing as little more than a fairly interesting success story. In 1974, when he began fooling around with some cheap claimers as a hobby, Robinson was making tires at the Firestone Rubber Company's plant in Hamilton, only 25 miles from Hagersville. Even then he was driven. "If the quota was 50 tires a shift, I'd make 80 or 100," Robinson says. While recuperating from torn knee ligaments suffered while waterskiing, Robinson met Canadian real estate tycoon Antonia Chiaravalle, who convinced him to leave the factory and go into training for a living. His first major success was Dream Maker, an \$80,000 Chiaravalle purchase who earned \$746,000 in the late 1970s.

By the late 1980s Robinson had developed a following, both in Canada and at the Meadowlands in New Jersey, because of his ability to take older horses and improve their times. "If a horse can go 1:53 [for a mile] and he's only been going 1:56," Robinson says, "I'll make him go 1:53." When Precious Bunny came under Robinson's control in 1990, the colt hardly seemed a prize. As a 2-year-old, Bunny had only one victory in 14 starts. But under Robinson, Bunny

became so precious that he anchored a stable that won more than \$6 million in 1991, earning Robinson his fourth Trainer of the Year title in Ontario, along with a number of enemies who whispered that he must be using some sort of illegal medication on his standardbreds.

"It used to be that whenever I had success, everybody figured it was luck more than good management," Robinson says. "But with Precious Bunny, the rumors started, mainly from irate owners who couldn't understand how we did it. I'm cocky enough to believe right now that I could improve just about any horse that's racing."

Unlike most trainers, Robinson prefers to do his training in private at his farm instead of at the racetrack, which only adds to the rumors about his methods. Robinson argues that the farm provides more control for the trainer and a healthier environment for the horse. One day last week Robinson went down the list of races that he has mapped out for Presidential Ball. Robinson hopes to hit all the big races, both in Canada and the U.S., the ones with purses ranging from \$250,000 to \$1 million. "It's possible he could earn \$3 million this year," Robinson says. "That's quite a thing to say, but I've got the horse to do it."

Everybody got that? —WILLIAM F. REED

IF YOU DETECT A CERTAIN GRITTIENESS IN THE PLAY OF Luke and Murphy Jensen, the newly crowned French Open doubles champions, there is a reason. They were raised to be football champions. Luke, 27, was going to be an All-America quarterback at Notre Dame.

Murphy, 24, was going to lead Michigan to the Rose Bowl. It would have been great, if tennis hadn't ruined everything.

For several years Patricia and Howard Jensen's plan for their sons' futures went along just fine. Under the tutelage of Howard, a former guard for the New York Giants and a football and tennis coach at Ludington (Mich.) High, the boys excelled in the national Punt, Pass and Kick competitions. Through noncontact sports like tennis they developed strength and coordination while waiting to mature enough physically to play organized football. At age 10, Luke was so sure of his destiny that he called Notre Dame coach Dan Devine after seeing the Irish lose a game on TV. "Don't worry," he told Devine, "I'll be coming soon."

But when he was 14, Luke's tennis suddenly took off. By 18, he was the top-ranked junior player in the country and had never played a game of organized football. He had his pick of collegiate tennis programs but chose USC. Why? "On my visit," he says, "O.J. Simpson and Marcus Allen shook my hand and showed me their Heisman Trophies."

Football's influence didn't stop there. "I approach tennis like Ronnie Lott approaches football," says Luke. "You always know I'm out there waiting for you." Murphy's enthusiasm for football is a little less pronounced—he learned that punters and kickers can make a lot of money without too much physical sacrifice—and his manner more subdued than his brother's, but his tennis talent may be as formidable. With 10 national age-group doubles titles under his belt, Murphy followed his brother to USC. He languished there for two

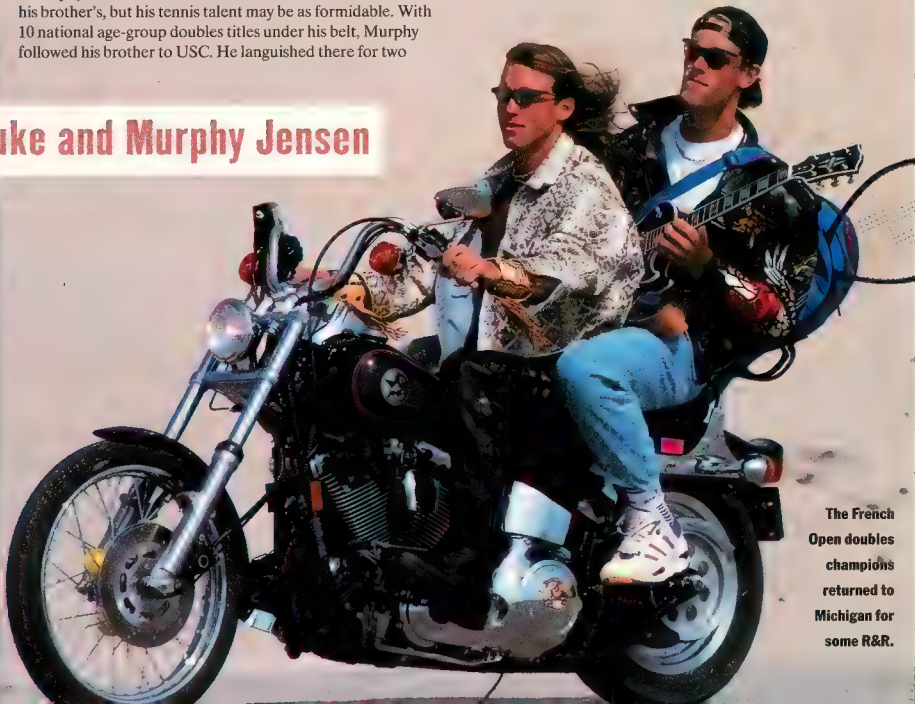
years before transferring to Georgia in 1990. He played one year for the Bulldogs, earning All-America honors in doubles, before joining the pro circuit in '91. This January he hooked up with Luke, who had turned pro in 1987.

What the Jensens have accomplished together in the last six months eclipses any result either has had separately. After a second-round loss at the Australian Open, they reached the semis of the Italian Open three weeks before winning the French. "We hadn't really played together since I left for college," says Luke. "Imagine if we had stayed together that whole time." The brothers also both play guitar for the rock group We've Never Heard of You, Either. Besides the Jensens, the group has Jim (Sticks) Courier on drums, Pat McEnroe on lead vocals and his brother, John, "doing whatever he wants," says Murphy.

While most of their colleagues stayed in Europe after the French Open to practice on grass in preparation for Wimbledon, the Jensens returned to Ludington to rest and to bomb around on Luke's Harley-Davidson. They consider their network of family and friends back home an important part of their success. In fact, their ultimate tennis goal is an all-Jensen mixed-doubles final in a Grand Slam event.

The Jensens' twin sisters, Rachel and Rebecca, are also excellent players. Rachel is in her second year on the women's tour (she's ranked 287), and Rebecca is an All-America at Kansas. Luke and Murphy already know how the four of them will pair up if such a final ever takes place. On the way to the hospital to see their newborn sisters 20 years ago, the brothers picked their doubles partners. Luke chose Rebecca, and Murphy took Rachel. Always planning. —KELLI ANDERSON

Luke and Murphy Jensen



The French Open doubles champions returned to Michigan for some R&R.

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Inside Baseball

by TIM KURKJIAN

FILLING BIG SHOES

In a recent game at Three Rivers Stadium, Pirate rightfielder Orlando Merced caught a fly ball, wheeled, fired a strike to the plate and nailed Rocky base runner Andres Galarraga, evoking memories of another Pittsburgh rightfielder. Roberto Clemente, of course.

"Oh, big difference in arms," a reverent Merced said after the game. "Gigantic difference in ability."

He's right. There is no comparison between Merced and the great Clemente, who died in a plane crash on Dec. 31, 1972, but there are plenty of connections: Merced grew up across the street from the Clemente family, in Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico; he plays the same position in the same ballpark that his idol did; and through Sunday he had a Clemente-like batting average of .355, second in the National League to Barry Bonds's .365.

"I remember the first time I played rightfield here [in 1990], I got goose bumps all over my body," Merced says. "I had tears in my eyes. I looked toward the sky and thought, What have I done to deserve this?"

Merced, 26, was just six years old when Clemente died, so he remembers only the legacy his hero left behind. "Growing up, every time I'd go in [the Clemente] basement and see his trophies—sometimes two or three times a day—it always seemed like the first time," Merced says. "I would ask Roberto Jr. [the oldest of Clemente's three sons] about the way he was, what he used to do. I learned baseball from hearing about Roberto Clemente."

Unlike Clemente, Merced wasn't a hot prospect coming out of high school, in '84. He didn't play baseball the year after

he graduated. But in February 1985, Clemente's widow, Vera, and his middle son, Luis, who was about to sign with Pittsburgh, arranged a tryout for Merced with the Pirates in San Juan. When he hit line drive after line drive at the tryout, Merced landed a contract with Pittsburgh. "I owe a lot to the Clemente family," he says.

Merced got 24 at bats with the Pirates in 1990. The following season he played in 120 games (mostly at first base), batted .275 with 10 home runs and finished second to Astro first baseman Jeff Bagwell in the vote for National League Rookie of the Year. Merced's average dropped to .247 last season, but this year he has been more aggressive at the plate.

Through Sunday, Merced was second among the Pirates with 32 RBIs and led them with 32 walks (no Caribbean-born player has ever walked 90 times in a major league season).

There's an outside chance Merced will make it to the All-Star Game next month, but it's the 1994 midsummer classic at Three Rivers that he is pointing toward.

On that day a statue of Clemente is scheduled to be unveiled at the stadium. It's a project in which Merced has a deep interest, and to raise money for it, he recently sent letters to major leaguers asking for donations. "I'll do anything I can to help," says Merced. "Roberto's an idol to a lot of people. He created a dream for me."

A dream Merced lives whenever he's playing in rightfield.

PRAY FOR THE NEW PADRE

Fed up with having to drastically slash the payroll, Padre general manager Joe McIlvaine left the team last Thursday. In his place stepped Randy Smith, who a week before his 30th birthday became the youngest G.M. in major league history. Too young, in the minds of some, who point to the turmoil that has centered on the Reds' 32-year-old rookie general manager, Jim Bowden (SI, June 7).

But Smith grew up in baseball—he's the son of Tal Smith, the highly respected former general manager of the Astros and former executive vice-president of



Merced's .355 average is just another of his links to his hero, the immortal Clemente.

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THE LINES

Watch the Birdie. Several dozen sea gulls invaded Milwaukee's County Stadium last Friday night, and most of them stayed around for the entire Yankee-Brewer game, searching for hatching moths, whose nests were located in the outfield and infield grass. "It was hilarious," said New York leftfielder Dion James, "but it was definitely a challenge to try to grab the ball and not a bird." In a game in 1987 against the Mets at Shea Stadium, James, then with the Braves, hit a routine fly ball that struck a bird, but he wound up with a double. "It's amazing no bird got it this time," James said after Friday's infestation. "I thought for sure I'd get the record: two birds hit in a career."

Direct Hit. Until last Friday, Cub reliever Chuck McElroy had thrown the most innings (232½) among active pitchers without hitting a batter. When he finally plunked one (Mark Carreon of the Giants), it led to his ejection. Chicago manager Jim Lefebvre and reliever Jose Bautista were thrown out in the fifth, after Bautista hit Trevor Wilson. Both benches were warned by umpire Bob Davidson, who then tossed McElroy in the sixth after Carreon was hit.

History Buff. In 1979, as a minor leaguer in the Pirate system, Junior Ortiz was the catcher when Gary Pellant of Class A Alexandria (Va.) became the second pro player ever to hit homers from both sides of the plate in one inning. Ortiz was behind the plate for Pittsburgh in '87 when the Phillies' Mike Schmidt hit his 500th homer. And last year, while with the Indians, Ortiz was catching when the Brewers' Robin Yount got his 3,000th hit. "I'd like to make history myself," says Ortiz, who has but 426 hits and five homers in his 12-year career, "but I'd probably be taken out for a pinch hitter before I got the chance."

By the Numbers. When the Reds' John Smiley got four singles in four at bats against the Expos on June 7, it marked the first time that a pitcher had a four-hit game since the Braves' Steve Avery had one in 1991.

the Yankees—and he has 10 years of front-office experience. Randy has been San Diego's scouting director and, for the past year, the assistant general manager of the Rockies. He's very popular among Padre front-office employees, who greeted his return with two standing ovations.

Smith's first move with the Padres showed his commitment to stability: He extended the contract of Jim Riggleman—one of the game's top young managers—through 1994. Still, Smith faces a very tough road in San Diego. Padre owner Tom Werner has said more "significant cuts" in the payroll are expected in the next year, which could mean the trading of two stars, first baseman Fred McGriff and third baseman Gary Sheffield.

"I don't think our situation is different than that of most small-market teams," Smith says. "We'll just maximize our money, spend wisely and maybe follow the plan used by Houston and Montreal: Build with young talent, supplement with inexpensive veterans. I'm very confident we can build a winner in San Diego."

OFF THE SCHNEID

The biggest winner in the Indians' 10-9 victory over the Rangers last Saturday night was Cleveland pitcher Matt Young, who got his first W since May 20, 1991. His victory drought spanned 47 appearances, including 14 losses. Young, who was taken out in the middle of an inning in each of his last 15 starts, won in relief. He pitched 4½ innings, threw 96 pitches (44 of them balls) and struck out eight.

Young left the game after the fifth inning, with a 9-6 lead, then suffered through a Texas rally that pulled the Rangers to 10-9 after eight. In the ninth Texas put two runners on base before Indian reliever Derek Lilliquist got the final out. "I can't tie to you," said Young. "I was a mess."

SHORT HOPS

Talk about a specialist. Rocky reliever Gary Wayne's job is to come in and get one left-handed hitter out and then take a shower. In 27 games this season, through the end of last week, he was 2-2 with one

save, and in those five appearances he had pitched a total of 1½ innings—25 pitches in all.... According to one major league scout, the slow start by Cardinal centerfielder Ray Lankford (.279, only 10 extra-base hits) has occurred "because he just doesn't have the same snap in his bat as he did last year. He's not as quick up there."... After poor seasons at the plate in 1990 and '91 and a bad first half last year, outfielder Andres Galarraga through Sunday had batted .339 with 19 homers and 82 RBIs since July 1, 1992.



At 30, Smith has young ideas.

Galarraga's secret: Colorado manager Don Baylor, who was his hitting coach last season with the Cardinals. Baylor has told everybody with hitting advice to stay away from Galarraga.... The Braves appear certain to trade centerfielder Otis Nixon, who has lost playing time since Atlanta signed Deion Sanders to a new contract. The Rangers and the Red Sox are two teams that could

really use Nixon in the leadoff spot.... Last week both Tony Gwynn of the Padres and Jim Eisenreich of the Phillies came up one leg shy of hitting for the cycle. The missing hit in each case was a single.... Ranger rightfielder Jose Canseco ducked his head into manager Kevin Kennedy's office last Thursday and said, "I'm ready to pitch." Kennedy replied, "That's not funny." Canseco pitched a mop-up inning against the Red Sox on May 29, developed a sore arm and missed playing his regular outfield spot for 12 days.... There are a number of reasons for the terrific play of the expansion Marlins—a four-game sweep of the Pirates moved them into fourth place (30-31) in the National League East as of Sunday—but none is bigger than the pitching closer Bryan Harvey. Last Thursday he set a record for saves in a season by an expansion-team pitcher when he got number 17 with a 1-2-3 ninth inning against Pittsburgh. (Enrique Romo of the Mariners had the record of 16, which he set in 1969.) By week's end Harvey had a share of the major league lead with 19 saves. It's a mystery why the Angels did not protect him in the expansion draft. Now California has a bullpen problem: Closer Joe Grahe has tendinitis in his pitching shoulder. ■

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Of Stars and

LOS ANGELES ANGELS



Hollywood STARS



The Coast League's
heyday featured (from
left) Ted Williams and
Chuck Connors, uniforms
with shorts and Gary
Cooper—Bob Hope hijinks.



Angels

Once upon a time, Tinseltown
was a heavenly place to
watch minor league baseball

BY JOHN SCHULIAN





These are the memories that make me a kid again, these memories of a Los Angeles that I can scarcely believe existed and of two Pacific Coast League teams not so much forgotten as overwhelmed by the city's ceaseless charge into the future.

So let me take you back to the early '50s and a Friday night at Gilmore Field, home of the Hollywood Stars. You could always see big names there—Spencer Tracy, Barbara Stanwyck and that crowd—and my parents may well have been looking for them. But I wasn't, because a Star pitcher named Red Munger had caught me staring at him and his enormous chaw of tobacco. Maybe we had box seats, although I can't recall our ever being in that economic bracket, or maybe my head of corn-silk hair stood out like a beacon in the twilight. Time turns so many things hazy, but I do know this: Red Munger grinned and said, "Hiya, Whitey." It was the first time a baseball player ever spoke to me.

Thirty years later, long past being thrilled by conversations with ballplayers, I was a Chicago sports columnist covering the dying quiver of a pennant race, but my mind was on old fascinations. I thought of Carlos Bernier, the Star leftfielder who loved arguing with umpires as much as he did stealing bases, and of Johnny Lindell,

the dead-armed ex-Yankee outfielder who became a knuckleball pitcher in Hollywood. Mostly I thought of Steve Bilko, who hit so many home runs for the PCL's Los Angeles Angels that I almost gave up on the Stars.

The floodgates of memory had opened, and all because Gene Mauch was in town.

He had been the Angels' second baseman back then, and now, in 1982, he had come to old Comiskey Park as the manager of another band of Angels, the American Leaguers from California. They were in the process of wrapping up a division championship, yet Mauch still labored under the shadow of past failures and a sense that his future would be just as bleak. He never expected anyone to ask about the Coast League and the best days he ever had as a player. When I did, his match stopped short of his cigarette, and his steely gaze softened.

"Where the hell did you come from?" Mauch asked.

He was almost smiling.

I come from the same place Gene Mauch does, a Los Angeles still golden with promise and perfumed by eucalyptus and citrus trees. It is where I was born; it is where Mauch's father migrated when there were no more oil wells to drill in Kansas. As a kid, I lived in the same neighborhood as Mauch, and I remember

the other ballplayers who called Inglewood home, too: George Metkovich, Peanuts Lowrey and even the National League's 1952 MVP, Hank Sauer. Like so many things viewed in retrospect, that seems a better time. At the very least, it was simpler.

You never traveled by freeway then unless you were going to Pasadena, birthplace of those concrete snakes. There were buses, there were the venerable Red Line streetcars, there were the old coupes that you always wished could fly when they were winding you over Laurel Canyon or Beverly Glen into the San Fernando Valley. And then there were the bikes that Irv Noren and his buddy Norm Hallajian rode to see the Angels play in Wrigley Field, the double-decked replica of its Chicago namesake. This is the same Irv Noren who grew up to give the Stars an MVP season in 1949 and then patrolled the outfield for the Washington Senators and the New York Yankees. But in the late '30s he was a transplant from upstate New York, a baker's son who prayed he was seeing his destiny every Saturday when he and Norm pedaled from their Pasadena homes down through Eagle Rock and Highland Park, past downtown L.A. and on to Wrigley, at 42nd and Avalon, just southeast of the Coliseum.

"We'd park right in front of the stadium," Noren says, "just lean our bikes

Stars and Angels

wood fans in '47 and '48. He burst on the scene at the same time as Gorgeous George, but did he peroxide his hair and throw gold-plated bobby pins to his admirers? No, sir, Gus went out and hit 40 homers in his second season as a Star, the way any regular guy would if he had a quick bat and a ton of muscles. And believe me, these minor league heroes were regular guys. They lived among us, they worked among us. My dad bought a '56 Chevy from Lou Stringer, a nifty second

across the street from Wrigley Field approached him.

"I'd known them for a while," he told me shortly before his death last year. "I'd gotten them signed baseballs, some gloves, things like that." Now they were offering to return the favor by putting Connors up on Saturday nights. He accepted instantly. "I'd sleep in their extra bedroom," Connors said, "and Sunday morning I'd eat breakfast with them." He was a player from Brooklyn who hap-



baseman for both L.A. and Hollywood, and he could just as easily have made the deal with Eddie Malone, who toiled for each team as an iron-man catcher. If my parents had needed any upholstering done, they could have gone to Roger Bowman, the Star lefthander who had a shop in Santa Monica. And we could always roll a few lines at Irv Noren's bowling alley.

No one remembered the intimacy of the times and the town better than Chuck Connors, who didn't realize he was only pausing in the Angels' lineup on his way to a place in television history as *The Rifleman*. When the Chicago Cubs farmed him to L.A. in 1951, Connors bought a tract house in Reseda, never thinking how long a drive it was to that Valley outpost in those pre-101 freeway days. He found out the first time he had to make the 25-mile haul across the Cahuenga Pass after a Saturday-night game, with a Sunday-afternoon doubleheader just hours away. It looked like Connors had a lot of sleepless weekends ahead until a family that lived

opened to be white, they were Angel fans who happened to be black, and this was a Los Angeles we would never see again.

The big man was Bilko, and I'm talking about more than the excess poundage that inspired a *Los Angeles Times* headline saying, NOT EVEN MRS. BILKO KNOWS HIS WEIGHT. I'm talking about the feats that enabled Stout Steve, the Slugging Seraph, to block out the big league sun for my generation of L.A. kids.

Thirty-seven home runs in '55, 55 in '56, 56 in '57—who needed Mays or Mantle, Williams or Musial, when we had Bilko making that kind of noise? True, he had washed out of the majors after a 21-homer season with the St. Louis Cardinals in 1953, and there was no denying that the Coast League pitchers he hit best were mediocrities. But it was far more impor-

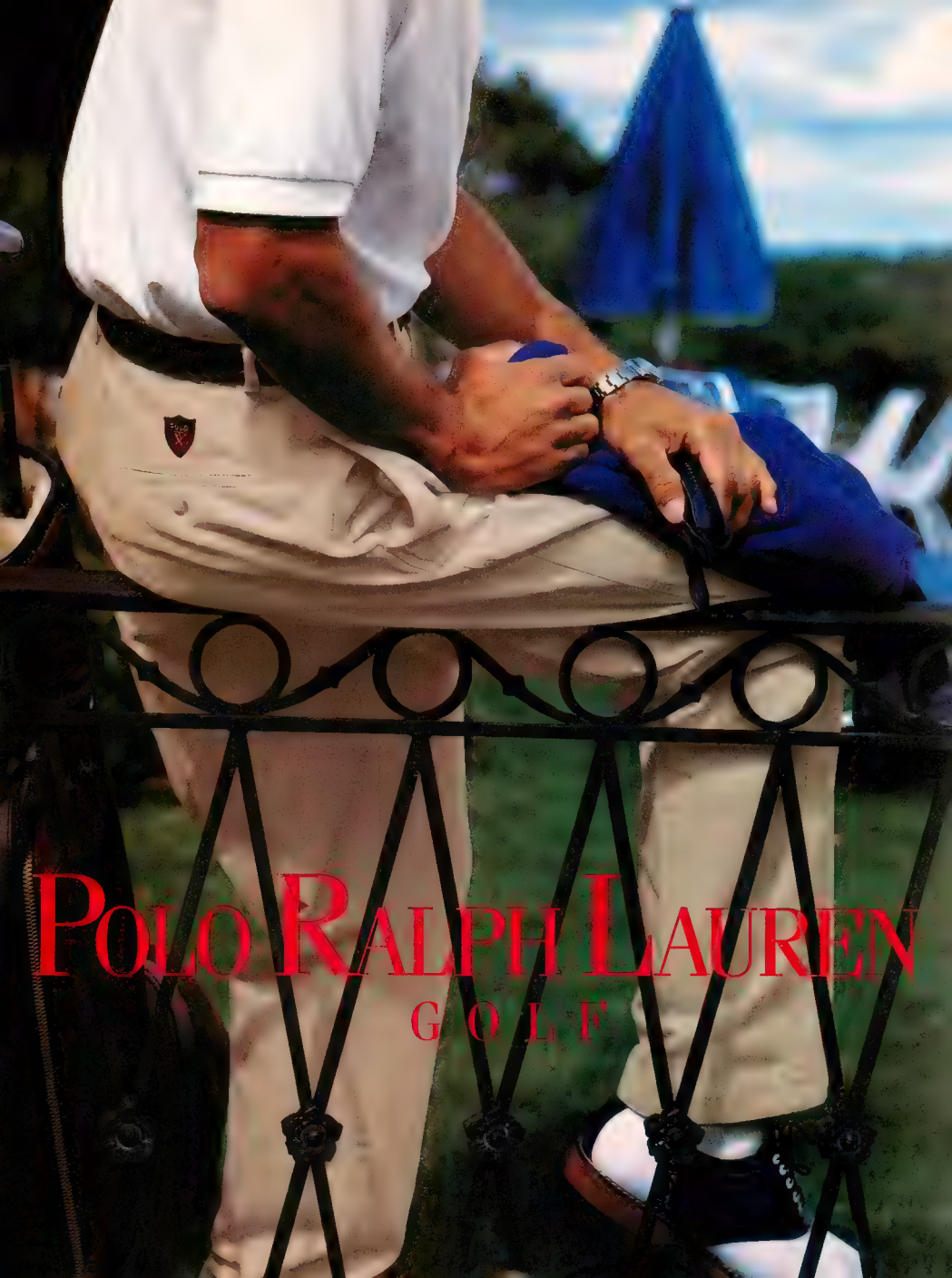
tant that he wasn't some remote god who never deigned to come any closer to L.A. than the western bank of the Mississippi. You could watch Bilko bash another one out of Wrigley Field and get a moon-faced grin afterward when you shoved your scorecard at him for an autograph.

Little did I know that he was upholding a long and honorable tradition. Almost since the PCL hit town in 1903, there had been one charismatic galoot or another on hand to make L.A. forget what it was and he wasn't. The most enduring of them all was Jigger Statz, who would have been memorable on the strength of his name alone if he hadn't brought so much more to the Angels. For 18 years, the longest run any player ever had with a single minor league team, Jigger roamed center-field wearing a glove he had carved the palm out of—all the better for feeling the ball, you understand—and making catches that still had native son Duke Snider in awe when he was vying with Mays and Mantle for the kingship of New York. "The writers would ask Duke who the best centerfielder he ever saw was," Noren recalls, "and Duke would always say Jigger Statz."

Statz was just a little rascal, not quite 5' 8", couldn't have weighed more than 150 pounds with rocks in his pockets, but he was Bilko's match when it came to casting shadows. He stole as many as 61 bases in a season, batted as high as .360, and Mauch remembers skipping school in 1942, Statz's farewell campaign, to watch him hit two homers on Opening Day. ("Only two he hit all year," Mauch says.) And yet, for all of that, there was something that kept Statz from sticking with the Cubs and the Brooklyn Dodgers. Los Angeles was his safety net.

Bilko knew the feeling. So did most of the other Stars and Angels I worshiped as a kid. For every Bill Mazeroski or Dale Long, every Noren or Zernial who blew through town on his way to the big show, there were dozens of others who couldn't survive in that rarefied 16-team atmosphere. But I didn't care that Frank Keller hadn't cut it in Cincinnati's outfield; he was the heart of the Stars, an amiable lug who hit 226 homers in 10 seasons and got to see his beloved number 7 retired. Nor did it matter to me that the New York Giants had found Roger Bowman wanting; it was more important that the last of his 22 wins in 1954 was a perfect game that tied Hollywood with the origi-

Bilko, seen here in 1956 taking one of his mighty cuts, was a huge (in both senses of the word) fan favorite.

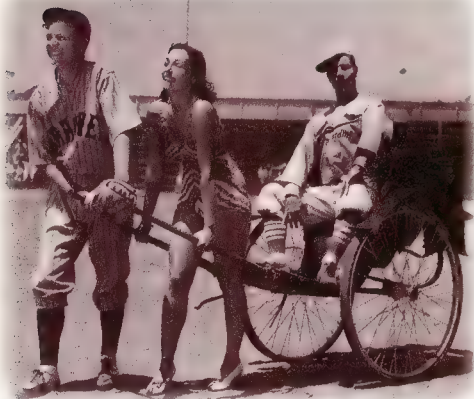


POLO RALPH LAUREN
GOLF

Stars and Angels

nal San Diego Padres for first place.

"We were journeymen, I was aware of that," Bowman says. "But I kept playing for the simple reason that this was what I did best and loved best. When I quit, it was going to be forever. So I told myself that until that happened, I was going to suck the marrow right out of the game."



In every other town in the Coast League, tough, proud men echoed that sentiment with bats, balls and, more than occasionally, fists. Some of them you've probably never heard of—Joe Brovia in Portland, Earl Rapp in Oakland and San Diego. But others had names that still ring a bell. Ernie Lombardi, a Hall of Fame career in the National League behind him, caught for Casey Stengel's Oakland Oaks until he was in his 40's. Joe Gordon, the old Yankee second baseman, hit 43 homers as the Sacramento Solons' playing manager in 1951, and two years later, Bob Dillinger, owner of a .306 career average in the majors, rang up a league-leading .366 for the Solons. And how about Bob Elliott, whose two homers led San Diego past the Stars in their one-game '54 pennant playoff? Seven years earlier Elliott had been the toast of the Boston Braves and the Most Valuable Player in the National League. Add them to the Angels and the

Stars and you have far more than a league that fulfilled its duty when it spawned Joe DiMaggio and Ted Williams. You have the best minor league ever.

"The best by far," says former Hollywood righthander Ben Wade, who studied the Triple A competition when he played in the International League and the American Association. The Coast League of Wade's era wound up with five of its towns in the majors—L.A., San Francisco, Oakland, San Diego, Seattle. But long before then, the PCL was traveling in big league fashion. Oh, there were still trains—Cece Carlucci, the old umpire, is unashamedly poetic when he talks about pulling into Seattle on the Great Northern—but by the mid-'50s airplanes were the thing. "Three-hundred-mile-an-hour Convals," Bowman says. "Boy, that was hot stuff." And when the teams ar-

again and again from former Stars and Angels, which suggests that money preoccupied ballplayers even when they made seven grand a year.

Not that seven grand was the ceiling. "I'll bet Frank Kelleher pulled down 15, maybe even 17 thousand dollars," Noren says. And there have always been stories that Bilko took a pay cut when Cincinnati summoned him back to the bigs in 1958.

Of course I was no more aware of that than I was of the fact that the Stars' and Angels' insistence on televising every home game was eating their attendance alive. All I knew was that TV made it that much easier to watch baseball played by men toughened by the Depression and World War II, men who threw to the right base, balked at the idea of batting helmets and wouldn't let Zernial wear gold shoelaces when he made his debut in a Hollywood uniform. The shoelaces, I hasten to point out, weren't Zernial's idea; they were on the only pair of spikes he could find as he hurried to join the Stars in time for Opening Day. Fair enough, but his new teammates still made Zernial give the laces a coat of black shoe polish. If anyone wanted to be colorful, he had to do it on terms the veterans understood. He could throw ground beef to the boo birds in San Francisco, the way Chuck Connors did. Or he could get back at the umpires the way Hollywood manager Bobby Bragan did when they didn't enforce the curfew in his own ballpark: The next night Bragan sent a coach to home plate with watches up and down his arms and an alarm clock around his neck.

But what they did most of all in L.A., Hollywood and the rest of the Coast League was play baseball. And no minor leaguers ever played it better than the '56 Angels. Here was a powerhouse to make me forget about Hollywood's pennant winners of '49, '52 and '53. These Angels won 107 games, 16 more than second-place Seattle. They batted .297 as a team and had six players with 20 or more homers, the Punch-and-Judy Mauch among them. Altogether they hit 202 homers, a barrage that no doubt helped pitchers Dave Hillman and Gene Fodge pile up 40 victories between them.

"I might be prejudiced," Mauch says, "but I think it was the best minor league team ever put together. I saw some teams in the big leagues that couldn't play as well. Hell, I managed two of them." (That would be the '61 Phillies and the '69 ex-

The Stars brought out other stars: (from left) Dick Powell, Dorothy Lamour and Joe E. Brown; and Roy Rogers with Lamour.



rived, they stayed for a week at a time. They would play single games Tuesday through Saturday and a doubleheader on Sunday, the second game being unfailingly referred to by sportswriters as "the abbreviated seven-inning nightcap."

It may have been the most civilized existence baseball has ever seen, and payday made it better yet. "I came from the big leagues and got a pay raise," Chuck Stevens says. Maybe the 1949 Stars were in better shape to play this slick-fielding, spray-hitting first baseman than the St. Louis Browns had been; after all, Hollywood's pennant winners drew nearly 600,000 fans. But you hear the same story



Rod Gilbert
1021 career points

Darryl Sittler
scored 6 goals, 4 assists
in one game

Stan Mikita
4 time regular-season
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Stars and Angels

pansion Expos.) But there are still historians who believe the '34 Angels, winners of 137 games, losers of just 50, were superior. On the East Coast someone could surely beat the drum for the great Yankee farm teams at Newark in the '30s and '40s. But that was before my time; the '56 Angels were of it. And they captured my imagination as no other team ever has—Bob Speake and Jim Bolger flanking Windy Wade in the outfield, Casey Wise turning double plays with Mauch, Elvin

proprietors, not being in the business of providing bonus entertainment for baseball fans, put up a protective screen on nights the Stars played. The only time anybody carped about it was when the game stank, inspiring chants to take the screen down. But few of the complainers were as enterprising as Art Spander, the *San Francisco Examiner* sports columnist, who grew up watching the Stars and the

better than a lot of National League parks—Ebbets Field, Sportsman's Park in St. Louis, places like that."

But even if Wrigley had been a rock pile, West would have loved its 345-foot power alleys and its jet stream to right-field. Without those advantages, West might not have put together back-to-back 35-homer seasons when his knees were crumbling beneath him. Nor would Mauch have hit more homers in his three years as an Angel than he did in the rest of his 16 professional seasons combined. Take the time he tried to slap the ball to the right side to advance a runner, popped up and was rewarded for his failure with an aerodynamic miracle. "The ball just kept carrying," Mauch says, "until it wound up in the bleachers." No wonder they shot TV's *Home Run Derby* at Wrigley.

At Gilmore the long ball was a much tougher proposition. In the park's 19-year history, Kelleher and Zernial were the only Stars with 40-homer seasons, and just three players—Luke Easter and two singles-hitting surprises, Lou Stringer and Bill Gray—were able to clear its towering centerfield wall, 400 feet away.

But talk of those wide-open spaces hard by the Farmer's Market shouldn't fool you; Gilmore was really as cozy and intimate as a ballpark could be. It was built entirely of wood—no concrete, no girders—and when CBS's TV City went up next door in the early '50s, the ballpark's anachronistic charm was magnified. Gilmore sat only 12,000 people, so when the Stars and the Angels battled—a verb not used casually here—the Hollywood management had to rope off portions of the outfield to squeeze in the overflow crowd. But if you think the players had people breathing down their necks there, you should have seen the grandstand. Just 34 feet from home plate, just 24 feet from first and third bases, it brought new meaning to the term *tight quarters*. Pitchers thought the plate looked closer, base runners had to be careful not to wind up in the box seats when they rounded third, and hitters fouled out about as often as John Wayne performed Shakespeare.

You'll never hear anyone who played at Gilmore bad-mouth it. But when former players cite the reasons for their affection, they are usually careful to forget one. It has to do with the cracks between the park's wood planks and with the era's no-



Pacific Coast League fans were the first to see Williams (left, at 18) and DiMaggio (at 17) as pros.

Angels. "One night I went way down in the rightfield bleachers and found a place where I could watch *The African Queen*," Spander says. It was a quintessentially Hollywood moment.

But when the film capital needed a ballpark for a movie, Wrigley Field usually got the call. It's there in *Damn Yankees* and *It Happens Every Spring* for the most logical of reasons—it looked like a big league stadium. And with 20,500 seats, it was meant to. When William Wrigley Jr. built the park for a million dollars in 1925, he modeled it after the one that bore his name in Chicago, right down to the ivy on the outfield wall. Funny thing, though: L.A.'s Wrigley Field had lights decades before Chicago's did.

"At Wrigley you felt like you were really uptown," says Max West, the former Boston Brave outfielder who finished his career with the Angels. "It was a far sight

Tappe behind the plate, George Freese at the hot corner, and over at first . . . Bilko . . . Bilko . . . Bilko . . .

You can always find naysayers who dismiss him as just another bush-league vagabond, small minds that refuse to acknowledge the 20 homers he hit for L.A. in the expanded American League, know-nothings who close their ears when Mauch rhapsodizes about the big guy's grace and speed and athleticism. But I trust the way I feel about him enough to want it on the record: Offer me 10 Mark McGwires and I would still rather have one Steve Bilko.

Once there were two ballparks.

Gilmore Field was the one with the drive-in movie behind its rightfield wall. Gilmore Drive-In, predictably enough. Its



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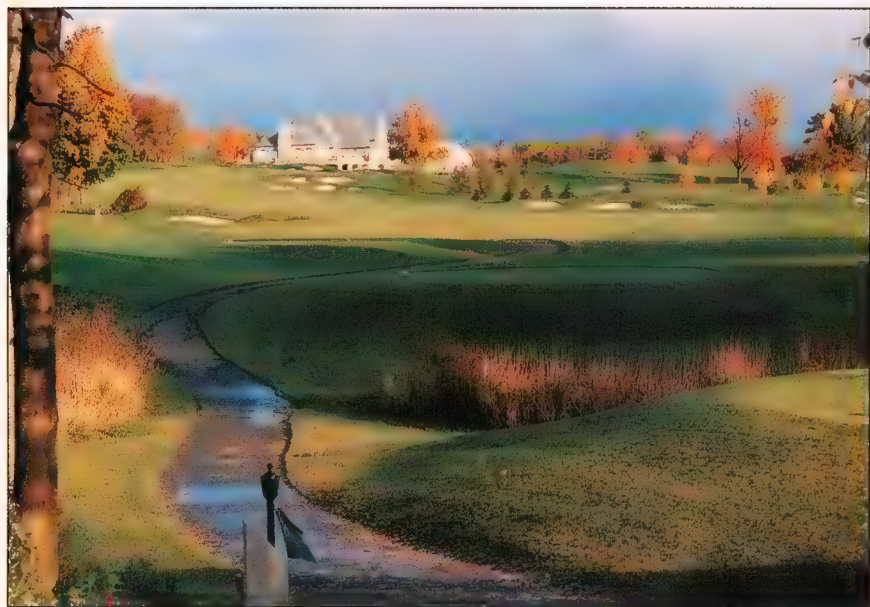
what they do. It's not like they have two more hands than we do. Or one more eye. But they routinely make the kind of shots we don't even make in our dreams. Yet for some reason, when you watch them in person, you

understand somehow. And you find yourself spending less time wondering how they do it. And more time admiring them.

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Stars and Angels

tion that women should wear dresses even to ball games. Contemplate that for a moment and you should realize why the players always spent the seventh-inning stretch under the stands.

Somewhere in my skimpy collection of Star memorabilia is an 8 x 10 of a knuckleballer with the beguiling name of Kewpie Dick Barrett. What makes the picture so memorable is not the dimpled doll face perched atop his 45-year-old body. It is the short pants Kewpie Dick is wearing.

He was with Hollywood for only half of 1950, but he arrived just in time to take the mound with his knobby knees showing. The idea of putting the Stars in shorts originated with—wouldn't you know it?—a sportswriter. After seeing British soccer teams wearing shorts, Braven Dyer of the *Los Angeles Times* put the bug in Hollywood manager Fred Haney's ear. Flannel was baseball's fabric of choice back then, and in the summer it could turn a uniform into an oven. So Haney took a chance and sent his sheepish players onto the diamond with the breeze blowing up their britches.

"The nicest thing any of the other teams said to us was, 'Hello, sweetheart,'" former second baseman Gene Handley recalls.

Nobody rode the Stars with more delight than Oakland catcher Eddie Malone. "I called 'em a bunch of Boy Scouts," he says. A year later, however, Malone found himself playing for Hollywood. "The first time I walked in the clubhouse," he says, "the guys were all lined up, and there was Haney at the end of the line. He was holding a pair of them short pants. When he gave 'em to me, he said, 'Now you're a member of the Scout troop.'"

As it turned out, Malone was more than happy to trade a few skinned knees for the drop in temperature when he played in shorts. Gilmore Field's female patrons certainly didn't mind the change in fashion, at least if you judged by the way they whistled at outfielder Clint Conzatter. And Bill Veech thought enough of the idea to borrow it in the late '70s, when he was making his last stand with the White Sox. But the Stars stayed with shorts for just three seasons before relegating them to the back of the closet.

If you want an epitaph for the experiment, Handley is happy to provide one: "Just another Hollywood stunt."

Carlos Bernier would be leading off first base and Gene Mauch would be scooping up a handful of dirt to throw in his face if he dared to try stealing second. You knew that Bernier would and that the hostilities would escalate from there, for these were the Stars and the Angels, two teams that couldn't play a week-long series without spilling blood. Even their radio announcers, the Angels' Bob Kelley and the Stars' Mark Scott, hated each other. So it's no surprise to hear that Bill Sweeney, when he managed the Angels, once offered a cashmere suit to the first man to start a fight with the Stars. Sweeney withdrew the offer because the heat-seeking Mauch took four games to tangle with Bernier.

Maybe Mauch minded losing out on the suit then, but he doesn't anymore; indeed, he sounds like he got everything he wanted. "There was a high throw," he says, "and when I came down, I landed on Bernier. Just kind of walked all over him." The memory elicits a chuckle. "God, we had some fun back then."

If you measure fun in bruises and bloody noses, the Stars and the Angels may have had more of it than anybody. "Best rivalry I've ever seen, even better than the Dodgers and Giants," says Ben Wade, who formed his opinion while sandwiching a three-year stay in Brooklyn between two tours as a Star. Perhaps the truest indication of the rivalry's power was that it worked like a full moon on even the gentlest souls.

Take burly Frank Kelleher, nicknamed Mousie by his Hollywood teammates and, in Handley's estimation, "as good a fella as ever lived." He wasn't any more of a brawler than Joe Hatten, the Angel lefthander who lived by his curveball, not

his dukes. But after Kelleher got six straight hits against L.A. in '53, everybody in Gilmore Field's overflow crowd knew Hatten would have to forget his manners. He did it by burying a fastball in Kelleher's back.

When home plate umpire Cece Car-



Moviemakers loved Wrigley Field too, as this scene from "Damn Yankees" attests.

lucci hustled to retrieve the ball, Kelleher charged the mound and threw a haymaker. "I thought it was Marciano," Carlucci says. "He hit Hatten in the chest. Must of knocked him 15 feet." The punch was a call to arms for a ruckus that lasted 10 minutes. When it was over Carlucci gave Kelleher the thumb—"I don't think he'd ever been kicked out of a game before," the old ump says—and let Hatten remain because, what the hell, where's it written that a man can't pitch tight?

The Stars replied by sending little Ted Beard in to run for Kelleher. On the first pitch, Beard—who said hello on the first day of spring training, goodbye at the end of the season and made the biggest noise of his career when he hit four home runs in a game in San Diego—stole second. On the next pitch, he lit out for third, where

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Stars and Angels

the Angels had stationed Murray Franklin, who had been a hero in Hollywood after his home run clinched the 1949 pennant. But Beard apparently wasn't the sentimental type. He went into Franklin with his spikes "belly-button high," as the Stars' Stevens puts it. What followed was the mother of all free-for-alls.

Franklin and Beard proceeded to pound knobs on each other. Their teammates stormed out of the dugouts to do the same, almost gleefully. Kelleher and Malone, who were in the Hollywood clubhouse getting their wounds from the first fight patched up, raced back to join the action. Carlucci remembers the Stars' Handley and the Angels' Gene Baker looking "like a couple boxers going at each other." Not that Carlucci could admire them for long. "I was down three times," he says. And his fellow umpire Joe Iacovetti had to duck a roundhouse thrown by Angel catcher Al Evans. "We couldn't stop it," Carlucci says, and it was only a matter of time, he feared, before the fans would come piling in.

William Parker, L.A.'s chief of police, must have feared the same thing as he watched on TV, because he wound up calling for every available unit in the area to get to Gilmore. "I seen 'em coming from leftfield, rightfield, everywhere—55 police officers," Carlucci says. "They got law and order for me." But not before a good half hour of war had been waged and photographers had the pictures that would fill three pages of LIFE magazine. And the second game of the doubleheader still had to be played.

They got it in with cops lining the dugouts and only nine players allowed out of each clubhouse at a time. Then Malone dragged his weary bones home and discovered that his kids had watched the whole thing on television. "They weren't sure what they'd seen because our TV was only about three inches big," Malone says, "so my daughter Gail, she asked me if I was in the fight, and I told her, 'Oh, no, honey, I wouldn't do that.'"

The next morning Malone was sleeping in when he felt a tiny hand shake him. It was Gail, and she was holding a newspaper that had a picture of him throwing his Sunday punch.

"Daddy," she said accusingly, "you always told us to tell the truth."

The Stars did their damndest to give Gilmore Field a Hollywood farewell, on

Sept. 5, 1957. They trotted out right-hander Hugh Pepper, and for 8½ innings he held San Francisco hitless. Then the Seals' Ed Sadowski lined a clean single to remind everyone that happy endings are for the movies and bittersweet goodbyes are for real life.

Even though the Dodgers would come to Los Angeles in '58 and anoint it big

that he was offended by a whorehouse across the street). In any event the Dodgers ended up in the Coliseum, and Wrigley Field was without a team until the American League expanded in '61 to embrace a collection of rejects, crazies and wayfaring strangers who called themselves the Angels. They were only passing through, but before they closed the door behind them, their part-time first baseman hit the last home run in Wrigley Field's history. His name was Steve Bilko.

By 1966 Wrigley, too, was a memory, leveled for a community center honoring a city councilman who lived to be 90 and spent the last years of his life getting fleeced by a gold-digging girlfriend less than half his age. Just one more bittersweet touch, you might call it; one more metaphor for a city built on the young devouring the old.

But my supply of cynicism runs low when I think about the Stars and the Angels. If you judge by baseball's merciless yardstick, they never measured up to the Dodgers, but it was the Bilkos and Kellehers and Mauchs who showed me how wonderful the game could be, and I would never forget them. They were with me every time I went to see the big leaguers play that first season in the Coliseum, just as they were that fall, when my parents told me we were moving to Salt

Liz Taylor, though only 15, was already a big star in another field when she served as a Star bat girl.

time forever, something was being lost. The Stars and the Angels were leaving, and they were all I knew of baseball. Before the first wrecker's ball hit Gilmore, I could feel the emptiness. I wasn't alone.

"For four or five years after the Dodgers came, I had this dream that there was still a PCL team at Gilmore," says Allan Malamud, a neighborhood kid who grew up to be an *L.A. Times* sports columnist. "Every time I woke up, it killed me to find out I couldn't go to a game there."

Gilmore was long gone before Malamud stopped dreaming, leveled so CBS could have more space for parking and storage but not replaced until the network built a studio there last year. I suppose there is a natural progression to that, but I still like the way the lights went out on Wrigley Field better. For a while Walter O'Malley contemplated having the Dodgers play there, an idea he eventually scotched because of inadequate parking (unless, of course, you believe the story



Smells Like Another Rose

Experts see telltale signs in Michael Jordan of the gambling addiction that felled another idol | by RICK REILLY



THANK HEAVENS THAT'S OVER. "AS FAR AS THE SUBJECT of Michael Jordan," NBA commissioner David Stern said last week, "that subject is closed." Hallelujah. And pass the Moët-Chandon.

So why is Chuck Freiburger so worried? "Because it reminds me so much of what we went through in the early stages," Freiburger says. "Exactly. The checks written for debts. The escalating amounts. The denial that there's any problem." What does Freiburger know? Not much, except that for years he was the lawyer for a confessed gambling addict—former Baltimore Colt quarterback Art Schlichter.

Accchhhh. Let's forget it. Jordan does not have a gambling problem. He says so. His father says so. Besides, the commissioner says that what Jordan did is as harmless as playing any state lottery.

So why is Arnold Wexler so worried? "I don't like the signs," says Wexler. "The guy is sending up some serious red flags." What does Wexler know? Not much, except that his Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey annually fields 22,000 calls for help from problem gamblers.

No, no, no. Why make yourself crazy? Whether Jordan lost only \$500,000 in golf bets to San Diego businessman Richard Esquinas, as Jordan told his press secretary, NBC's Ahmad Rashad, last Friday, or \$1.25 million (negotiated down to \$300,000), as Esquinas says in his recently self-published book, it was only beer money to an eight-figure human teller machine like Jordan. The only downside for Jordan is that the next time *he* wins, people will probably pay him off according to the Jordan Rules: 25 cents on the dollar.

So why is Chet Forte so worried? "My old gambling-addict friends and I just laugh at some of the things he says," Forte says. "That gambling is a 'hobby.' That he went to Atlantic City that night 'to relax.' Nobody gambles to relax. You gamble for the *thrill* of it." What does Forte know? Not much, except the Emmy-winning director of *Monday Night Football* and numerous other sports shows is recovering from a gambling addiction that cost him \$1.5 million and his career.

And you're right. Jordan broke no laws, no league rules, not so much as a city statute. But when a man has written \$108,000 worth of checks of which photocopies were found in the car of a dead bail bondsman; when a man first lies about—but then admits in court—to paying \$57,000 in golf gambling debts to a convicted felon and money launderer; when a man is so bored with the city of New York that he takes a four-hour round-trip to Atlantic City between two huge playoff games, don't you squirm for him a little?

According to Wexler, here are some of the "soft" signs that, taken together, point to a problem gambler.

- **An IQ over 120.** Jordan certainly is intelligent.
- **An unreasonably high level of optimism.** To chase and chase and chase and get down hundreds of thousands of dollars to Esquinas, Jordan had to feel as if his slice would disappear at any moment.
- **A high level of energy.** Friends say Jordan rarely sleeps. If he stops at 18 holes in a day, a typhoon must be coming.
- **An extremely competitive personality.** Jordan? Competitive? SI asked a member of the Bulls' team last week how competitive Jordan is.

"This guy is a killer," the source said. "He's the most viciously competitive player I've ever seen. That's what makes him, I think, the greatest player ever. He has practically ruined [reserve forward] Rodney McCray for us." When the two players are on opposite teams in scrimmages, the source says, "[Jordan] is in Rodney's face, screaming, 'You're a loser! You've always been a loser!' Rodney can hardly put up a jumper now."

After practice, Jordan wants to shoot baskets for money. And it doesn't matter whether he's betting \$5 a shot or \$100, he wants his money *right now*. He wants to beat you in everything. "He passes people going home some nights—on the shoulder—doing 125," the source said. "He doesn't care. He lets the highway patrol chase him a little. You think they're going to give him a ticket? They'll ask for his autograph, but they won't give him a ticket. Guy scares me to death."

Competitive? One day in Monte Carlo last summer, where the Dream Team trained before the Barcelona Olympics, coach Chuck Daly beat Jordan by one shot on the golf course. "That's it," Daly said, meaning that he was quitting while he was ahead. "I'll never play Michael again." The next morning, at the crack of dawn, Jordan rang Daly's room. Getting no response, he went directly to Daly's room and knocked. Then he pounded. He wouldn't go away until he got his rematch. He got it, and he won by a shot. But would you expect anything else? Whatever searing obsession is inside Jordan, driving him to be the most dauntless basketball player on earth, does not suddenly leak out of his Nikes when he leaves the court.

"Sitting down with shady characters; needing to get to the casino in the middle of something that is very important in his life," says Wexler. "That tells me there's a very big thirst there to gamble."

"I hope I'm wrong," says Freiburger. "But we could be looking at the next Pete Rose."

Still, let's do what Stern and Rashad and Jordan all want us to do—forget about it. Subject closed and swept under the rug. None of our business anyway. Besides, Jordan is this nation's most cherished athlete. What could happen to him? ■

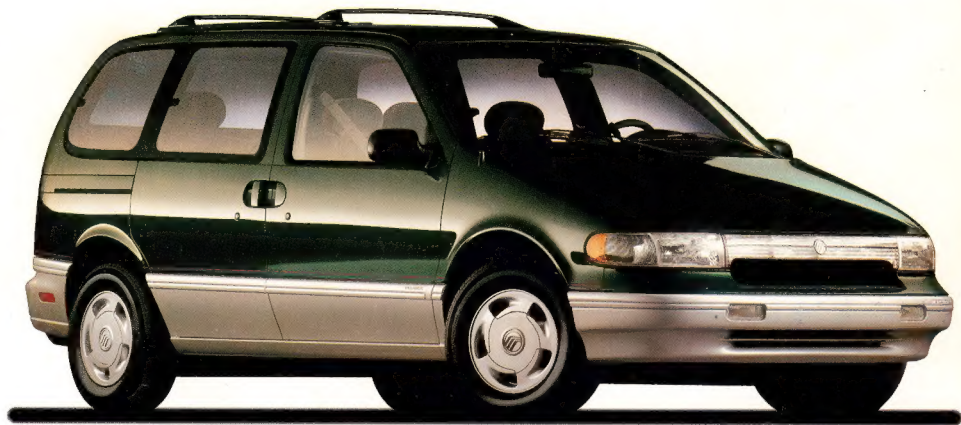


*As Jim philosophized about
women, I continued to sip my
Baileys and coffee and read.
Between
the lines.*



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